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C. F. B. MIEL.







# A SOUL'S PILGRIMAGE

BEING THE PERSONAL AND  
RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES OF

CHARLES F. B. MIEL, D. D.



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## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	5
AT COLLEGE AND SEMINARY . . . . .	11
THE JESUITS . . . . .	19
IN PARIS . . . . .	31
LONDON . . . . .	44
FIAT LUX! . . . . .	58
IN ROME . . . . .	70
IN ENGLAND AGAIN . . . . .	81
BREAKING CLOSE TIES . . . . .	91
NEW FRIENDS . . . . .	101
THE NEW WORLD . . . . .	111
VARIED EXPERIENCES; NEW YORK . . . . .	126
BOSTON . . . . .	139
SAN FRANCISCO AND CHICAGO . . . . .	156
RELIGIOUS REQUIREMENTS OF OUR TIME . . . . .	175
THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH . . . . .	182



## INTRODUCTION.

YOUNG MIEL, a student in the seminary at Besançon, about the year 1842, having heard the eloquent Jesuit, Père de Place, preach at the cathedral the Advent season, determined then and there to enter the Society of Jesus. But there was a difficulty in the way. Miel had contracted a debt for his collegiate education, which he was now paying off from his salary as tutor to young Marquis de Lénoncourt. He would not be free to follow his *attrait* until this debt should be paid. Thereupon his friend, the Abbé Perny of Pontarlier, afterwards vicar-apostolic in China, offered to take his place as tutor and turn over the whole of the salary toward the payment of Miel's debt, and did so.

From that time until now, in his hale and reverend age, Dr. Miel has had the gift to win friends. As one of these he has done me the honor to permit me to introduce him to American Churchmen and Christians. If he is not better known than his introducer it is because his useful and most interesting life has been led in fields in which Americans are not wont to walk. Here is the manner of life of the Jesuits described, kindly and with appreciation, by a man who made his full

## Introduction

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novitiate with them, remained for several years under their spiritual direction and entertained with them the most friendly relations, until conscience and clear conviction obliged him to leave their church.

It is difficult, moreover, for us, living as we habitually do in the provincialism of our English language, to realize that our venerable confrère is one of that brilliant group of the later years of Louis Philippe, one received on equal terms by Lacordaire, de Ravignan, Lamartine, Montalembert, Lenormant, Ozanam, Jules Simon, Laboulaye, etc.

An English lady, an Anglican, claimed the privilege to take off his shoulders and upon her own the burden of educating his brothers and sisters, in order that he might the sooner enter the Roman priesthood. When the Abbé Gounod turned aside to follow music instead of the priesthood, it was to Miel he gave his surplice and beretta. Ravignan was his confessor, and presented him to the Archbishop of Paris for ordination, and to him was given to represent the French Catholics at the funeral of Daniel O'Connell.

How such a man with such an *entourage*, with such prospects of preferment before him, was driven from within to abandon it all and start upon the long and weary pilgrimage in search of that

## Introduction

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place where truth dwells, makes up the story of this book. It is the history of a Soul. His sad conviction that fidelity to truth would lead him out of that great Church in which his heart and imagination were bound in capitive chains, his stumbling about in the darkness of blank negation, his search for spiritual kinsmen among the Unitarians and the Transcendentalists, and his finding of a spiritual resting place in the Anglican Communion—all these make up a story which has been often lived but seldom told. We wait yet for the Apologia of the convert from Rome, which may be set over against that other drawn out by the great Anglican preacher who became the insignificant Roman cardinal. That no Protestant cardinalate has come to Dr. Miel is because Protestantism pays her champions in a different kind of wares. The foundation truth of the truth as it is in Christ, is that truth is its own exceeding great reward. None knows this better than the author of this autobiography, who, in his serene old age, sets down in little the story of a life which was great, at the solicitation of his sons and his friends, among whom I am glad to subscribe myself.

S. D. McCONNELL.

- *Holy Trinity,*  
*Brooklyn,*  
*Advent, 1898.*





## AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTORY.

MY DEAR SONS :

You have often expressed a desire to know more perfectly the noteworthy events and especially the religious experiences and changes of my life. You say that you feel these may not only interest but help spiritually those who, like myself, have been harassed and tried by doubt. If this be so, I will gladly tell my story to you, personal and sacred as many of the details are, and you in turn may tell it to others.

Let me begin at the beginning, and relate to you, first, in all simplicity, the principal incidents of my classical education.



## CHAPTER I.

### AT COLLEGE AND SEMINARY.

I WAS born on the twenty-third of September, 1818, at Vars, near Gray, a village about eight leagues from the city of Dijon. My parents were deeply religious people and, in their own simple circle, highly considered. They sustained themselves and their family on the produce of a modest property. My mother, then in her twentieth year, took charge during the winter of a school for young girls, the first one started in the district. The curé of the parish, M. Demay, was a man of superior culture and learning. His relations to my parents were those of a kind friend as well as a devoted pastor. When I was still a stripling, this generous man took an affectionate interest in me, discovering, as he fondly hoped, a recruit for the sacred militia. Counting my taste for study and religious exercises as prophetic of a career, he arranged with my parents to send me to the college at Gray.

Our good friend, ambitious for his young charge, had insisted on my entering one of the

advanced classes, which made my course difficult and somewhat discouraging at first. But I had resolved to succeed, and by persistent effort at the end of the first year was able to secure the two highest prizes ; those for excellence and diligence. The year following brought me forward far beyond my scant hopes and even the highest expectations of the curé himself. Of the fourteen prizes, thirteen fell to my lot with honorable mention of the fourteenth. It was decided by the masters that I should not enter the second class but pass at once to rhetoric, the highest form.

My life in the college was so pleasant and my progress so encouraging, that I found myself looking forward to the time when I might become a member of its corps of teachers. In all likelihood I should have become such had not an unforeseen incident occurred which gave my thoughts and views a more serious turn.

During the vacation, a young fellow-student came to visit us at Vars. He was not what one would call an exemplary youth, but a cheerful and pleasant companion, and such as one might pass a happy day with and not discover any grave fault. As I accompanied him homeward, he showed his real character in such a revolting manner that I was amazed and stunned. My revulsion of feeling, I cannot describe. Without even saying adieu, I

turned on my heel, and when I had reached a spot where he could no longer see me, I threw myself on my knees asking pardon for him and grace for myself. A vile suggestion made by him was a horrible revelation to me, and my whole nature was strangely stirred. In a single glance there opened before me the two possibilities of human life : the terrible apparition of a soul wedded to the vile-ness of sin, the heavenly vision of a soul consecrated to the beauty of holiness.

My resolution was instantly made. I determined that in the future I would devote myself wholly to the cause of religion. Twenty minutes later I was at my mother's side communicating my resolution to her. She embraced me fervently, happy as one rarely is in this world. My father, too, heartily sanctioned my determination, and that very evening we spoke of it to our worthy curé, who wrote the next day to the Superior at Luxeuil, asking my admission to his seminary, the first in the diocese of Besançon.

There was one serious objection to my leaving my father's house, which did not occur to me at once. At Gray I had lived with relatives and consequently my expenses were very small. At Luxeuil it would cost considerably more to live, and, as our family now numbered nine, my parents

were not in a position to make a large outlay for my education, much as they would have liked to do so. My decision, however, was made, and it was a matter too serious to me to admit of change. I set out without delay to visit a cousin of my mother's, a bachelor of comfortable fortune and generous spirit. Having told him frankly how matters stood, he asked me whether, if he should agree to advance the money for my expenses as the need for it arose, I would pledge myself to make it good when I was able to do so. I gave him my word to this effect, and without more ado, returned to my home, and immediately set out for the seminary at Luxeuil.

At that time the seminary had at its head two remarkable men, the Superior, M. Guérin, who some years after became Bishop of Langres, and the Director, M. Mabile, who formerly had been Vicar of Gray, where he had known me, and who afterwards became Bishop of St. Claude and finally Bishop of Versailles. Both of these men favored me with a special affection of which I still retain many precious proofs.

Coming from the third class, according to rule, I should have passed to the second; but after brief examination, I was put into the highest class, that of the rhetoricians.

There was a privilege for those who obtained

the first rank in that class they greatly coveted, that of dining on Sunday at the professors' table. This pleasure fell to my lot the six last Sundays in the seminary year.

During the summer, M. le Comte de Montalembert, the youngest of the peers of France, the leading layman of the liberal Catholic Party, and afterwards the associate of Lamennais and Lacordaire in the publication of "L'Avenir," came to pay our seminary a visit. A kind of academical reception was given him, and I was charged by the Superior to address the young and noble peer in behalf of the establishment. Although the speech inspired by the occasion won from him flattering congratulations, I was far from suspecting that later I should find myself in frequent communication with this distinguished man, then upon the threshold of a brilliant career.

The diocese of Besançon had its school of philosophy and higher mathematics at Vesoul, *chef-lieu* of la Haute-Saône. There I pursued these studies for two years, and there it was my good fortune to meet one who was to prove my warmest friend, M. Paul Perny, of Pontarlier, later apostolic vicar in China, and author of a much esteemed Chinese-French grammar and dictionary. This noble fellow was soon to illustrate for me in the most real and generous way the

words of La Fontaine: "How sweet a thing is a true friend! He seeks for our wants deep down in our hearts. He spares us the shyness of discovering them ourselves."

Up to this time my studies had been simply preparatory. It was at the great seminary of Besançon that they were to be completed, where the regular course in theology comprises four years. According to a special arrangement in this diocese, the students pass the first of these years as boarders in the seminary itself. The three following years they lodge in the town, as convenient to them. The object of this arrangement is to initiate the young clerics into the life of the world. After my first year under this system, I looked for a way of not only meeting my expenses, but also of earning enough to enable me to begin the reimbursement of my debt. The Superior, aware of this intention on my part, most kindly interested himself in my behalf and secured for me the position of preceptor in a noble and highly esteemed family, that of the Marquis de Lénoncourt. For two years I held this enviable position, devoting two hours each day to my studies at the seminary and the rest of my time to my young pupils.

Already I had begun to be preoccupied as to what I should do after my ordination. What I



had seen of the manner of life among the country priests did not at all attract me, and I mentally resolved to serve in a different way the cause of Christ and His Church. Such were my feelings, when a Jesuit, renowned for his eloquence, Père de Place, came to preach the Advent at the cathedral of Besançon. I followed the instructions regularly, and was so deeply impressed with the man and his message that I thought it well to go and see this reverend father and ask his advice as to my best course for the future. The more I knew him the more I admired him, and presently the idea formed itself in my mind that no higher purpose could I follow than to become a member of the society which he so worthily represented. On learning of my desire, he offered to recommend me to his Provincial as a postulant. There was but one serious obstacle to my acceptance of such an offer—the debt that I had promised and had already begun to pay. It was then that Abbé Perny gave me the most noble evidence of his goodness and the truth and depth of his friendship. Without a moment's hesitation, he proposed to take my place as preceptor of the young Lénoncourt and to give his salary toward the debt I had contracted. It was too generous a sacrifice, too kind an act. Yet his heart was set upon making it and he was determined that I

should carry out my idea. I knew him well ; too well indeed to think of declining his offer, and thanks to him I was able to make the necessary arrangements and set out for the novitiate at Avignon, the only one the society then held in France.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE JESUITS.

I FEEL called upon here, in justice to the Jesuits and for the better information of those who oppose that order, to state plainly what I know and think of this remarkable society and also of the character of its members.

Indirectly it owes its birth to Luther !

It was towards the middle of the sixteenth century, when the influence of the Reformation threatened to spread throughout all Christendom, and made as if to force an entrance even at Rome itself, that the cry arose from those who had remained faithful to the papal power : “Who will check the onrush of this devastating torrent ?” In answer to this cry of distress, Ignatius of Loyola, a man of ardent zeal and rare genius, came to the front as champion of the Church’s cause. With a keen sense of the impending danger, he resolutely set about organizing a force which then and thereafter might be relied upon to stand firm by the papacy and secure its perpetuation. The fruit of his zeal and labor was the Society of Jesus, which

to-day is rightly reckoned the most influential clerical body in the religious world. What it has done thus far is a matter of history, what it expects to do in the future is a matter of conjecture. A few words only as to its instrumentalities and methods, and first of all as to the character of the men who compose it.

They cannot be ordinary men ; they must give evidence of special excellence in some unmistakable way. When a postulant has been admitted, the superiors, acting upon the principle that every man is endowed with some predominant talent, as soon as that talent is discovered, see to it that every opportunity shall be given for its highest cultivation. From the time when he is admitted as a member of the society the novice is afforded the best possible chance for intellectual development along the lines of his special aptitude. If his gift is that of teaching, then a teacher of the highest order he shall become ; if he promises ability as a preacher, then a preacher of power and persuasiveness he will be trained to be. At least, it shall not be for want of proper exercise in his calling or for lack of wise and watchful direction, if he fail to attain success.

Meanwhile his conduct must be above reproach, and to this end there is an "exercise of modesty" in the discipline of each week. The novices are brought together in their hall of assembly, and the

master of novices, after prayer, summons at his discretion one of their number, who immediately leaves his place, advances in silence to the middle of the room and kneels. His brother novices are then called upon in turn to say what they have noticed in his behavior requiring correction or improvement. In all good conscience each must give his criticism, and when the entire assembly have complied with the rule, the master reviews the comments that have been made, to which he adds his own admonition, indicating clearly what must be amended before another such inquiry. The same impressive and searching discipline is performed for every novice.

To this exercise is added another, of not so serious a nature, called the "*exercice de bonne tenue*." Its object is to inculcate dignity and grace of manner. In the presence of his brothers, the youthful novice is required to walk, to take a seat, to salute a friend or a superior, etc., etc., and all these gestures are submitted to the scrutiny of the assembly in order that defects in deportment may be pointed out and corrected. It is for this reason that the members of the society, as far as social demeanor is concerned, appear to an observer to have been run into the same mould, and can be distinguished even in a crowd.

These two illustrations will serve to indicate

the minuteness of detail in the discipline of the society. Nor are such methods to be lightly passed upon as gratuitous, for the object in view is to turn out men trained in every particular and destined eventually to become the polished tools of their several superiors.

To this end the greatest stress is laid upon unquestioning obedience. For the Jesuit this becomes in time the supreme virtue. Individual preference has no place in his code of morals. In any supposable conflict between personal inclination and the rule of obedience, the Jesuit is not to hesitate for an instant. He is to obey, first, last, and always. The rule by which he binds himself is couched in the following explicit and comprehensive terms: "*Obedientia vestra sit ex omni parte perfecta; tum in intellectu, tum in actu, tum in voluntate.*" To paraphrase: "Let your obedience be perfect in every way; in understanding (persuaded that what you are ordered to do then and there is the best thing you can do), in action (doing what is ordered exactly, neither more nor less), in will (not doing it because you must, but with a willing heart)." This virtue of obedience is cultivated by every means possible, and the rise of any relationship which might hinder its growth is prevented by simple devices. For instance, the novices are always three in a room, lest strong

personal attachments spring up, which might be the case where two are thrown closely and intimately together. The same rule is observed at the time of recreation, where three must be found walking together. In leaving the room, the novice first seeks the permission of the "ancient" (who may be the youngest man of the group), and must say what he means to do in his absence. If it is his purpose to call at another room, he must also state the fact and the reason to the "ancient" there.

In order to inculcate a spirit of readiness to obey, even in the performance of the humblest duties, a novice is required to spend a month in the kitchen and do the bidding of the cook (a man of meagre education) as freely and faithfully as if he were Jesus Himself. In the spirit of a servant of the Master he is obliged to do the most menial work, taking no account of its unpleasantness, but rather counting it gain to perform a disagreeable office.

Promptitude is emphasized as an essential element of willing obedience, and in order to develop this virtue the novice is constantly reminded of his duty in a very practical way. For him, the clock which calls to any exercise, no matter of what sort, is the voice of God. His part is to leave instantly the occupation with which he is concerned at the time, however engrossing it may be, and hasten to

the performance of the duty of the hour. Perfect obedience admits of no delay even in seemingly small matters.

Of course the most important object in the discipline is the spiritual improvement of the future Jesuit. To effect this, there is the practice of solitary meditation one hour every morning, preceded by a preparation of a quarter of an hour and followed by a review of the same length. In addition to this, the novice passes through the great Retreat of thirty-one days, during which he is left entirely to himself and may communicate only with his director. In this course, he observes five meditations of an hour each, one of them in the middle of the night, which with the preparations and reviews occupy seven hours and a half in every twenty-four. Let me say for the information of those who are apt to count such devotions perfunctory, that one finds oneself entering so naturally and so deeply into these periods of silence and sober thought that looking at the notes which were written at the conclusion of each one of them, about the distracting thoughts that had come into my mind, I find several times this remark: "My distractions during this meditation might have taken the time of the recital of the Lord's Prayer."

So it is that the Jesuit is trained to be a gentleman, a superior man, an obedient man, a spiritual



man. Having, then, a perfect tool at his disposal, in what way shall the Superior use it for the ultimate object of the institution ?

The two principal means employed by the Jesuits to obtain and exercise a decisive influence over human souls are education and direction.

To accomplish their work, the leaders of the Reformation wisely spread and diffused learning among the people. To counteract that work, the Jesuits conceived the idea of raising not altar against altar, but school against school ; not indeed for the sake of learning in itself, but as the most effective means of saving and extending the power of the Roman Church. No pains are spared to accomplish this purpose ; so that you will find the Jesuit teacher not content merely with instructing his charges, but before everything else endeavoring to win their affection and respect. Particularly is this the case with those who have the children of Protestants under their guidance. And in this direction their success is so complete that those of their pupils who do not become Jesuits or fervent Roman Catholics, remain almost invariably devoted friends of their former masters. The same is true of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, whose establishments correspond to those of the Jesuits in object and moods and are under their direction. Both the colleges of the Jesuits and the schools of

the Sacred Heart are designed, not for the poor, but for the children of influential parents, who, in time, are likely to occupy positions of prominence in society. To control society at its best, to shape the minds of those who are presumably destined to influence a large circle of others because of their rank and attainment, is the purpose of education in the hands of the Jesuits.

Another and perhaps more effective avenue of power and influence is spiritual direction. Under ordinary conditions any one of the faithful, conscious of sin, is enjoined to confess it to his priest, who, with or without words of advice, grants or withholds absolution, as the case may be. The relations between confessor and penitent naturally end here. But it is not so with a Jesuit confessor. Spiritual direction supplements confession. By dint of continued persistence, the Jesuits have succeeded in having this idea accepted by the pious Romanist, that just as the word of the Bishop of Rome is to be unhesitatingly accepted in matters of dogma, so the word of the spiritual director is to be faithfully followed in matters of conduct. In order to walk in the way of Christian perfection, the devout believer must accept one condition, that of perfect obedience, and in all things, even the temporal, act upon the advice of his director. It follows from this that those who

have placed themselves under the direction of Jesuits—and most Roman Catholics of standing have done so—are destined to act out the parts assigned them by a society of which the supreme object is the exaltation of the papacy. One can readily see to what an extraordinary degree this organization is able to carry out the ambition of Rome. The Superior-General has absolute power over the provincials of the order; the provincials absolute power over the superiors of the various establishments, colleges or residences; these superiors in turn the same authority over the subordinate fathers of their houses; the fathers over the faithful who follow their direction; and lastly, these faithful Catholics, being oftentimes at the head of some seemingly independent society (like that of St. Vincent de Paul), carry the same influence to the very last and most humble category of Romanists.

Thus the Jesuits fulfil their fourth vow—that of complete consecration to the interests of papal authority. Small wonder is it, if Rome treats them as its privileged retainers, and grants a Jesuit peculiar powers which no secular priest may exercise, save under the authority of his bishop. The Jesuit knows no master but Rome, and Rome rewards his service with special favors.

I remained at the house of probation of the

Jesuits more than a year, from January, 1842, until March, 1843. I made my complete novitiate there, passing through all the tests to which aspirants to this famous order are subjected. I retain a precious and pious remembrance of it all. It was there I acquired the best of my early religious experience, and my notes of daily meditations are unequivocal testimonies of faith, of fervor, and of zeal.

The fathers of this residence were eight in number, the novices thirty. Never have I met with so much talent united to so much piety and virtue. The thirst for souls seemed to devour these young aspirants to the apostolate.

One day it was reported that four missionaries of the society had just died the death of martyrs in Maduré. The master of the novices called these together and announced with evidence of deep emotion the sad but glorious news. Then, after a moment's silence, he continued: "That is not all, brothers. These worthy fathers must be replaced. Which of you are ready to start immediately to evangelize the very people who have killed our noble missionaries?" With one accord all present rose to a man. Four were selected, and within forty-eight hours were on their way to the field of blood. This is the devotion of those who are so badly understood and so often calumniated.

However, sincere as was my admiration for the members of this society, when the moment came for me to declare my allegiance to its rule, I was obliged to decline to make the step and for a very simple but forcible reason. According to the rule of the order, every novice who pronounced his vows, not yet ordained a priest, could not be made so until the age of thirty. I should have had to wait five or six years and pass them in study or teaching before being elevated to the sacerdotal office. I longed to preach and to work; I pined to engage actively and openly in the wider field of the Church's labors. Moreover, there was pressing upon me a duty that it seemed to me I could not honestly ignore. The eldest of eight children in a family in which the question of daily bread was always an urgent one, it seemed to me the time had come to put my shoulder to the family burden and to help to bear the weight of this responsibility along with my parents. Four brothers and three sisters were growing up, and must needs be educated. As the eldest son, all possible sacrifices had been made to give me the advantages of a liberal training. It behooved me, in simple gratitude, to see to it that my labors brought some practical measure of comfort and assistance to those who had so freely and generously denied themselves for me. Mindful of this duty I resolved

for the time being to couple my work in the ministry with some such employment as would enable me to render the home cares less burdensome. The Superiors of the society entered heartily into these views, and it was arranged that I should go to Paris, remaining still under their spiritual direction, and prepare myself there to receive Holy Orders, engaging meanwhile in such work as I was able to do.

At the moment of leaving the novitiate, the master of the novices gave me this certificate, which I still possess :

“ I certify that the Abbé Miel, of the diocese of Besançon, spent more than a year in our house of probation at Avignon to study his vocation to the religious life, and that during all that time he was a model of good conduct and piety. I certify, besides, that if he leaves us, he does so of his own free will and not because the superiors do not desire him amongst them.

“ Given at Avignon, March 1, 1843,

“ DE JOCAS,

“ *Rector of the Novitiate.*”

## CHAPTER III.

### IN PARIS.

ON arriving in Paris, I immediately put myself under the direction of the most celebrated and certainly the most gifted of all the Jesuits I have ever met, Père de Ravignan, the Lenten preacher of Notre Dame, and the contemporary of Lacordaire, who at that time preached the Advent course in the same cathedral. It was my earnest desire to prepare myself in the best possible way to fill as worthily as I could the sacred duties of the ministry. Having made sure of a means of living by giving two or three hours each day to teaching, I devoted the rest of my time to personal culture. Seldom has a young man had finer opportunities for intellectual growth than I at this time. For France, the last years of Louis Philippe were perhaps the most brilliant of the century. In every department of learning and letters talent was represented by illustrious men. In poetry, Victor Hugo and Lamartine ; in parliament, Berryer and Montalembert ; in the government, Guizot and Thiers ; at the Sorbonne, Cousin, Jules Simon,

Lenormand, Ozanam and Coeur ; at the College de France, Michelet and Quinet ; in the pulpit, Lacordaire and de Ravignan.

I was anxious to learn something from each of these remarkable men. My Sundays were spent in listening to the famous preachers. During the week I distributed my time between the Sorbonne, the Chamber of Deputies, and the Chamber of Peers. Presently, to my great delight, I found myself in relation with such men as Berryer and Montalembert, Jules Simon and Ozanam, Lacordaire and de Ravignan. The latter, as my spiritual director, proved a warm friend as well as a wise and trustworthy guide. Of many intimate conversations with him I retain a sweet remembrance. His was not only a holy, but a liberal spirit. I was not surprised later when I heard it said that he thought of reasserting his independence by asking the General of the Jesuits to release him from his vows.

A trait which exhibited the nobility of his feelings and the largeness of his views appeared in one of our conversations. One day, troubled with doubts, I opened my heart to him, and, encouraged by his evident sympathy, ventured to ask the question : " Is there not, my father, some way of recognizing what is true from what is false in religious doctrine ; by which one may avoid the



necessity of constant reference to authorities, so many of which simply confuse the mind by their conflicting statements?" "There is a way," he replied, "which, in the case of such doubt, I myself follow and recommend to you. Every doctrine which tends to elevate the mind and enlarge the heart is true ; and every doctrine which works the contrary effect is false. Follow this principle and you will not fail of the truth." I have done so and am satisfied.

Presented by this excellent and holy man to the Archbishop of Paris, Monseigneur Affre, two months after my arrival, I was admitted to the subdiaconate, and a year later, the 1st of June, 1844, was ordained priest in the church of St. Sulpice. The following day I celebrated my first mass in the church of St. Louis d'Antin, which was in the parish where I then lived.

Much as I desired to devote myself wholly to the work of the ministry, my determination to earn enough to allow me to assist in the education of my brothers and sisters kept me for a time from engaging in the more active field of the Church's labors. Accordingly, when the lucrative post of preceptor and chaplain in the family of the Marquis de Cossé Brissac was offered me, I accepted it. The summer abode of this noble family was the chateau of Blanville, near Chartres.

The winter was spent in Paris, where they occupied an apartment close by La Madeleine. Besides my duties in this household, I acted as chaplain at the house of the Comtesse de Gontaut, sister of Cardinal de Rohan, and an intimate friend of my patron, where I had, as clerk of the mass, the first Christian baron, le Baron de Montmorency. On Sundays I officiated at La Madeleine, and preached there occasionally, having with two other ecclesiastics the oversight of the catechism.

It was shortly before this that the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was founded. The circumstances which led to its institution are of peculiar interest. On a Sunday evening, Ozanam had gathered together a few students of the Sorbonne to take tea with him. After a simple repast, he laid before them a plan by which each one was to undertake during the coming week to visit one or two poor families of the neighborhood and report to him on the following Sunday. The enthusiasm of the young men for so practical a form of benevolent work soon developed, and shortly it became advisable to form the little group into a society the object of which should be just such simple works of charity. From that modest beginning, in the library of this large-hearted man, the association has grown until to-day it numbers two

million members ! You may be sure that I was glad of an opportunity to be associated from the first with such a band of zealous men.

Another society to which it was my privilege to belong, was "Le Cercle Catholique de la rue de Grenelle," which was founded at this time with the object of banding together Catholics of liberal views, clerics as well as laymen. It counted among its members such men as Lacordaire, Ozanam, Montalembert, de Falloux, de Montigny, Riancey, etc.

It was my honor to represent this society in Dublin at the funeral of the celebrated Irish liberator, Daniel O'Connell. My companion was the young Count de Lestanville, who had been chosen by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul as its delegate. We set out together, and at Liverpool met the steamer bearing the remains of this distinguished man. Never shall I forget the sight that greeted us on our arrival in Dublin Bay. A vast throng had gathered in the quay, and after a solemn and awed silence, suddenly burst into a wail of lamentation such as it is given a man only once to hear. It seemed as if the hearts of the bereaved people were breaking with grief. As the cortège moved from the quay, the multitude reverently followed the catafalque, and kept up a constant dirge until the remains of their hero were

deposited within the church where the funeral service was to be held on the morrow. Few things could have been more imposing than that solemn service, as well as the great procession which followed the precious remains to their last resting place. It was evident, indeed, that Ireland had lost her chief son, and her people mourned for him as a mother mourns for her best beloved.

Some weeks after our return to Paris, Père Lacordaire pronounced the funeral oration of Daniel O'Connell at Notre Dame. John O'Connell, son of the great statesman, and Member of Parliament, had been invited to be present, while the Catholics of Paris were represented by some of their most illustrious men. No one, perhaps, was better fitted than Père Lacordaire to perform this solemn office, and his words on that occasion were a worthy tribute of the people of France to the memory of a great man.

On the evening of the same day, a dinner was given to John O'Connell by the Baron de Montigny at his superb hôtel (formerly the hôtel Montmorency) in the rue de Babylone. Sixty guests were present, including many Church dignitaries, statesmen, journalists, etc. It was the evening of February 22, 1848—a day destined to prove a memorable one in the history of France. Shortly before we sat down, the populace had

begun to assemble in the streets, and the crowds seemed to be moving toward the Champs Elysées. A valet was dispatched every quarter of an hour to bring us news of what was transpiring. As the reports grew more alarming, the guests became more preoccupied. After dinner, the company broke up into little groups to discuss the situation. A messenger presently brought us more serious tidings, so that the Baron de Villequier exclaimed: "Why, it seems a veritable mob!" To which the prophetic Berryer replied: "Take care that it is not a revolution!" Two days later, Louis Philippe was obliged to flee from the Tuileries, and restless France found herself once more a nation without a ruler.

It was during the outbreak in June of the same year that the heroic death of the saintly Archbishop of Paris, Monseigneur Affre, occurred. The soul of this devout man was deeply moved by the spirit of strife among the people. It cut him to the heart to see Paris on the verge of a fratricidal war, and God's call seemed clear to him, as the spiritual father of the community, not to spare himself in any endeavor to restore order and promote peace. Accordingly, on the morning of the 27th, he proceeded to the scene of conflict and mounted the barricades to plead with the populace on the one hand, and the soldiery on the other.

Scarcely had he uttered the words "My children—" when a shot fired from a neighboring building pierced him and he fell dead before the eyes of the mob. This tragic event was enough. A horror seemed to seize every one at the enormity of the crime, and from that moment the insurrection ceased. Truly the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

It may be proper in this connection to speak a word about the power of the pulpit in Paris at this time. Perhaps the two most eminent preachers that France has produced are Bossuet and Lacordaire. Both were the pride of Dijon, their native city. The superiority of Bossuet appeared in what he said, that of Lacordaire, in the way in which he said it. The latter's eloquence corresponds precisely to the word attributed to Demosthenes and repeated since by Massillon. When asked what were the essential elements of eloquence, the illustrious Greek is said to have replied: First, action; secondly, *action*; thirdly, ACTION.

I recall an occasion when this principle in the preaching of Lacordaire was illustrated. On a Sunday after Easter, Abbé Castan, a good friend of mine, and I found ourselves almost lost in the immense crowd pouring into Notre Dame to hear the great preacher. The subject he was to treat was the struggle between good and evil, the

conflict between the powers of the world and the Church of God. He opened with a paraphrase of the first verses of the second Psalm: "*Quare fremuerunt gentes*" \* \* \* ? Presently, as the idea began to unfold itself to his marvelous imagination, his thought rose to such a height that my friend whispered to me: "He cannot continue in that strain!" It was true. Human language seemed to fail him. Yet standing there, his face illumined with the great thought, his body swaying under the inspiration of the mighty truth which his tongue refused to utter, he continued his gestures with such descriptive force, that, under the action of that mute eloquence, the assembly seemed to shudder. It was only a few seconds, perhaps, but seemed many minutes. Then the preacher slowly drew back his arm and solemnly laid his hand over his heart. There was a moment of absolute stillness, and then the entire audience gave vent to its feelings in one great, spontaneous outburst of applause. On the following Sunday we were again in our places, and, before the address, the Archbishop of Paris felt compelled to request the congregation to remember the sacred character of the place and refrain from any outward expression of approval. But such was the eloquence of Lacordaire in pursuing the same theme, that ere long the Archbishop himself was betrayed into an

unconscious clapping of hands, which was just enough to lift an irksome restraint from an audience hardly able to suppress its feelings.

Comparing the eloquence of Lacordaire with that of de Ravignan, I do not know of a better description than that which was given by my friend, Abbé Castan, one Sunday when we were returning from a sermon by the distinguished Jesuit. We had been talking together of the rare talents of these two men, and I asked what impressions were made upon him by their preaching. "When I have heard Lacordaire," he replied, "I feel inclined to throw myself on his neck; when I have heard de Ravignan, I feel inclined to throw myself at his feet." Excellent appreciation! Lacordaire, in preaching, endeavored to make his hearers love religion; de Ravignan taught them to revere it.

To hear these men was a great privilege, to know them personally was even a greater. For then it became apparent that it was the choice personality of each, and not the gifts of speech alone, which was the real source of their power. Looking back over the past, I have good reason to value every occasion which brought me into contact with them.

Any account of my experience in Paris would be incomplete without a word about my particular friends, whose companionship was one of the



choicest joys and sweetest satisfactions of my life in that great city. The first, l'Abbé Castan, I have already alluded to. A young man of rare accomplishments and charming personality ; a nephew of the Archbishop of Paris, and his private secretary, as well as honorary Canon of Paris. Our friendship was most intimate, and many of the happiest experiences we enjoyed together. My other friend was M. Olivaint, who had been professor of Philosophy at the College Bourbon, and, in matters religious, was a sceptic. Later he became a Christian and left his position to take the post of preceptor in the family of the Duke de la Rochefoucault. The fact that our pupils were friends, brought us often together, and it was not long before our acquaintance ripened into warm friendship. Like many others who have accepted the religion of Jesus after years of unbelief, Olivaint became a Christian in deed, as well as in name. To him religion was a reality—a life, as well as a creed. In many ways he revealed the depth of his religious life. One day, I remember, at the beginning of vacation when we were about to separate for a time and were making our adieux to each other, he made this remark (truly characteristic of him): “And what are we going to do, in order that after our absence we may find ourselves better men than we are to-day? for there is no holiday in the Christian career.”

Another characteristic of this man which revealed his true nature, appeared from a glimpse he gave me of the habits of his mind. In the princely house where he lived, the family frequently entertained on an elaborate scale. Often he found himself at table side by side with pretentious persons who had little attention to bestow upon a preceptor. "What do you do," I asked him, "to overcome the tedium of these prolonged ceremonial dinners?" "I imagine," he replied, "that I have for my neighbor my Divine Master, I converse with Him, and I assure you the hours are full of charm, and the time passes most agreeably."

Some years later, M. Olivaint entered the Order of the Jesuits and became superior of one of their houses in Paris. He died in 1871, a victim of the Commune.

My sojourn in Paris might have continued indefinitely had it not been for the unforeseen generosity of an English lady who, though a member of the Anglican communion, showed herself a friend in deed. She had chanced to hear me preach at La Madeleine, and the next day sent me a letter asking if I could recommend a French teacher for her two young cousins. I found her such a governess as she desired, and to prove her gratitude for this trifling favor, she invited me to dine. I accepted, and ere long a warm friendship

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sprang up between us. In the course of our acquaintance she discovered what it was that kept me back from devoting myself exclusively to the work of ministry. She immediately proposed to see to it personally that the funds were furnished to provide for the education of my brothers and my sisters, and was so persistent and sincere in her offer that I finally consented. Certainly in my short religious career I had ample reason to believe in two things : the goodness of God, and the nobility of those who have given themselves to his service.

## CHAPTER IV.

LONDON.

AT this time, the accession to our ranks of John Henry Newman and other distinguished members of the Anglican communion, inspired the champions of Romanism in France with the belief that England was ripe for papacy. Frequent meetings were held among us, and our enthusiasm and zeal for this great end was heightened. I was free at this time to do as I pleased, and being deeply moved by the bright prospects before our Church in Great Britain, I determined to give myself to the work of conversion, and to devote my energies to an enterprise which seemed destined to contribute so largely to the glory and the power of the Holy See.

My friends were most cordial in their approval of this resolve, and in many happy ways expressed an interest in the step I was about to take. Some of the sweetest evidences of their regard were the books and other gifts they bestowed upon me; among others, a very tender souvenir from Charles, then Abbé, Gounod. On the evening

before my departure, this charming man brought me his surplice, beretta and other personal belongings. These were the more precious to me since, shortly after this, Gounod gave up the idea of following the sacred ministry, in order to devote himself without reserve to that noble art which has made his name immortal.

Arriving in London, I set out immediately to report myself to Cardinal Wiseman for such service as he should think me fitted to undertake. As I had not yet learned to speak English plainly, it was arranged that I should preach as occasion offered at the French church of this great capital, and on Sundays celebrate the military mass at Woolwich for the Roman Catholic soldiers of the garrison. It was not long before my familiarity with English increased, and His Eminence was able to transfer me to the charge of the Catholic mission recently established at Canterbury. Here I preached my first English sermons. An incident happened during my sojourn here which is still fresh in my mind. My hostess was the lady who had founded the Roman Catholic mission. Her near neighbors were two nieces of Sir Walter Scott, women of culture and refinement. Although these ladies were Protestants, they passed many an evening with my friend, and took a lively interest in the object of my mission in England.

One day they invited me to join them in a visit to the great English cathedral. Upon arriving at a certain part of the sanctuary, "It was here," said one of them, pointing to a spot before us, "that Thomas à Becket was put to death." Now, to me, Thomas à Becket was an illustrious martyr, St. Thomas of Canterbury, and it was in obedience to an actual feeling of reverence that I fell instinctively upon my knees on the spot. When I arose, after some moments of silent prayer, I found my companions strangely impressed by this simple and spontaneous act. That it moved them more deeply than I at first imagined, I am led to believe, from the fact that in later years they both became members of the Roman Communion!

From Canterbury I was sent to Kingston, on the Thames, to officiate in a beautiful church built there by a converted Jew. It is the same chapel in which the marriage of the Princess Helen of Orleans with the Duke of Aosta took place not long since. Kingston is within easy distance of Claremont, the royal residence which the Queen of England placed at the disposal of the dethroned King of France, Louis Philippe. By special invitation I had the high honor to visit there the noble Queen, Marie Amelie, and to receive from her later an exquisite set of sacerdotal vestments for the feast

## London

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of the Assumption, as a token of her interest in my work. I saw Her Majesty after this, on several occasions, and was privileged to assist at the ceremony of the first communion of her grandson, the Comte de Paris.

From Kingston, I was sent to inaugurate a mission at Chichester. There was no chapel at our disposal in this place, so the services were in the salon of a devout Romanist, a friend of the cardinal. In this humble way the work of conversion was begun in this ancient city. As these new-born missions only required my presence on Sunday and two or three days of each week, I was able to spend the rest of my time in London in works tending toward the attainment of my first object.

One of the most attractive and engrossing of these was the delivery of a course of fifty lectures on Church History at the house of Lord Granville. Lady Granville, herself a Roman Catholic, hoped by this means to strengthen the cause of Rome among the more influential residents of the metropolis. To this end, she assembled at her house on these occasions many Catholic ladies belonging to the aristocratic circle, among whom, I remember, was her mother, the Duchess D'Alberg; Lady Georgina Fullerton, her sister-in-law, a late convert; the Countess Grey, as well as a number of others.

A chapel where I liked to worship from time to

time was that of the Oratorians. These men, previous to their conversion, had all been Anglican ecclesiastics, and had made their classical and clerical studies at Oxford, where they were widely known for their piety and scholarship. The Church of Rome had good reason to be proud of such recruits, and fully realized the benefit that had been conferred upon the cause of propaganda by their accession. The most celebrated was Father, afterwards Cardinal, Newman. Father Faber and Father Dahlgrens, with whom I had frequent and agreeable interviews, were also remarkable men. Father Newman was at the head of the establishment, and greatly esteemed both as a priest and a preacher. In this last particular I have reason to believe that he did not always come up to his reputation. It was announced that on Holy Thursday he would preach on the Eucharist. The Church could not contain the numbers who had come to hear him. Cardinal Wiseman was there with his secretary, and instead of sitting in his throne, occupied a place in the first row of seats, in order to see and hear the preacher the better. Everyone was prepared for a great utterance, in keeping with the day and the solemn subject of the discourse. For one, I was disappointed. For the preacher, in giving a description of the circumstances connected with the Last Supper,



chose to portray it, not according to the Gospels, but according to the revelation of St. Bridget. In the most serious manner the form of the table was described, the place which each of the disciples occupied, the shape and position of the dishes and vases, etc., etc., and all this detail was told in the confident manner of one who was narrating historic facts. I do not believe it would have been possible to find in France a serious preacher, with a respect for his audience, capable of giving them such an instruction. How a man so able and scholarly as Father Newman undoubtedly was could have been betrayed into it, is beyond my comprehension.

England until now had been looked upon as a missionary territory by the Latin Church, and as was the custom in all countries of this character, the Roman authority was represented, not by bishops, but by apostolic vicars of whom at this time there were four. In the year 1850 Pius IX, supposing from the reports made to him, that the Isle of Saints was about to return to Romanism, divided the country into Catholic provinces and appointed a bishop at the head of each. This bold act on the part of a foreign prelate aroused the indignation of the English people, and provoked wide-spread and violent opposition. Every evening the streets of London were thronged with long and noisy processions, in which the Pope was

carried about in effigy and subjected to all manner of insult. I suffered more than I can say from this blasphemous abuse, as it seemed to me, of the Head of our Holy Religion—the highest representative of Christ—and I felt it my duty to protest, no matter how insignificant my protestation might be. Accordingly, I published successively, two tracts in favor of the papacy, entitled “Rome and the Holy Scriptures” and “Rome and the Primitive Church,” with the hope that some Protestant minds might see, perchance, the grounds of our claims and the justice of the step taken by His Holiness, Pius IX.

These publications attracted more notice than I could have hoped for. In the Catholic press they were heralded as timely utterances, and were spoken of as logical and conclusive arguments in favor of the papal supremacy. The *Catholic Standard* gave considerable space to their review, and the *Catholic Vindicator*, in concluding its criticism of them, said, “The proofs are numerous and overwhelming. To disprove them would require even a sounder head and a stouter heart than those possessed by the chivalrous Cummings, and the redoubtable Hugh McNeil.” The Rev. Father Brownbill, Superior of the House of the Jesuits in London, wrote me, on receiving the second pamphlet: “I beg to offer you my many and sincere

thanks for the pamphlet I have had the pleasure of receiving from you to-day. I have read it with great satisfaction. I hope many will peruse it, as it is well calculated to instruct and enlighten those who think so wrongly on the subject of which it treats."

But above all other opinions, I appreciated that expressed in the following letter :

"I received with true pleasure your pamphlets and your good letters, my dear Abbé ; I thank you with all my heart. God has truly made you an Apostle of England. Continue and spread the good news. I admire the manner in which you are able to write and speak in English. The remembrance of you, be sure of it, remains faithful in the depths of my soul. Au revoir, then, till it please the Lord. Believe in my very tender attachment,

"DE RAVIGNAN, S. J.

"Paris, 21st February, 1851."

The Protestant journals whose attention was excited by these pamphlets, of course judged them differently. One amongst them, *Bell's Weekly Messenger*, published a series of articles in which the scriptural texts and historic references were the object of severe criticism. The author of

these articles, Mr. Charles Hastings Collette, one of the glories of Oxford, and a man deeply versed in the writings of the Fathers, as well as the history of the first Christian ages, announced to me his intention, in a polite letter, in which he gave me entire credit for sincerity, of pointing out that the facts upon which my arguments were founded were either fabrications or else falsely stated. Sure of having advanced only those points which conform to the teaching of the most esteemed authors of Catholic history, and acting besides under the impression which prevails among Roman Catholics, namely, that honesty is not to be expected from Protestants in a religious controversy, I did not feel it my duty to reply to his very civil note. My silence did not seem to discourage him, for in the course of a few days he wrote me four other letters, which in turn failed to elicit a reply.

One morning, I heard a knock at the door of the house where I lived, and as the servant was absent, I went to open the door. I found myself face to face with a gentleman of distinguished appearance, who handed me his card, and to my astonishment I read the name of my correspondent and adversary, "Charles Hastings Collette." Common courtesy obliged me to receive him. Without ado, he announced the purpose of his visit by

repeating in a decided voice what he had written, declaring that he had perfect faith in my sincerity, that the pamphlets were marked with a stamp of honesty, and that had it been otherwise he would have disdained any dealings with me. Then he stated that he was ready to prove to me that I had been mistaken in many of the texts quoted and of the facts submitted in my argument. "Without doubt," he said, "you have drawn your knowledge from the most estimable sources known to you. But these sources are far too modern. I ask you but one thing and that, as a man of honor, which I take you to be, you cannot honestly refuse me. It is to consult not Protestant books, but the writings of Catholics of an earlier date than the Council of Trent, of whose authenticity and authority there can be no question. To this effect, I pray you to make conscientious researches in the library of the British Museum, where such documents abound. I shall secure you the necessary permission to consult these works, and as the librarian is my friend, I shall ask him to help you in your investigations, and we shall see what conclusions such a study will lead to."

By refusing to accede to such a request, I should have given proof of a want of love for truth, and so sure was I of my ground and the historical validity of my argument, that I did not hesitate to

accede to the wish of this ardent and courteous opponent. For a fortnight I spent all of my afternoons in searching those books which could enlighten me on so grave a subject. By faithful study, I was able to compare the facts as I had been taught them, with the facts as the early Church historians stated them. The result of this investigation was as painful to me as it was satisfactory to Mr. Collette. On all the contested points I found that the weight of authority was against my position. I shall quote but one of these, but that one will be decisive.

Among all the treatises on Dogmatic Theology in use in my day in the high seminaries of the Church, the one most esteemed was the work of Cardinal Gousset, perhaps the greatest Roman theologian of the century. In this work the sixth canon of the Council of Nice (A.D. 325) is thus written :

*"Ecclesia Romana semper habuit primatum."*

From this pretended canon one draws irresistible conclusions. That the first ecumenical council, although composed almost exclusively of bishops from the East, who would naturally look with jealousy upon the growing influence of the See of Rome, should have found itself obliged to witness to the truth of her supremacy by a special canon, declaring that from the beginning

Rome had had the primacy, surely no more positive assertion could be made of the fact which Protestant historians repudiated so decidedly.

Resting secure upon my knowledge of this canon, I was almost stunned to find that the original form of the canon, as enacted by the Council, was quite different from that which I had been taught. The sixth canon simply states that Rome had a relative primacy. The plan before the Council was to transform the See of Alexandria into a patriarchate, and so the canon states. As the Bishop of Rome has the primacy over the bishops of the suburban cities, in the same way it is fitting that the Bishop of Alexandria should occupy a similar rank with regard to the bishops of Lower Egypt. Manifestly, the part that had been suppressed in our manuals put an entirely different complexion upon the subject.

This discovery, and others like it, came to me as a severe shock. I requested the librarian to permit me to carry away and keep until the next day the collection of the Acts of Councils where I had found the canons in their original integrity. He consented, and I lost no time in finding Cardinal Wiseman. I asked him if there was any doubt of the authenticity of the sixth canon of Nice, as it is given in our manuals of theology. "None that I know of," he replied. I then showed

him my volume and said, "It is a Catholic publication, old, it is true, but only the more to be trusted on that account. Here are the terms in which the sixth canon is expressed." His Eminence appeared very much astonished, and as he perceived that I suffered from something more than astonishment, he advised me not to attach too much importance to the matter. I left him to call upon the Jesuits, but my interview with my spiritual director, Father Brownbill, gave me no more satisfaction than that with the Cardinal. For the first time in my life, I found myself in a peculiarly painful state of mind—assailed by doubt and with no friend to turn to.

Now, to entertain doubt is regarded as one of the greatest sins by the Roman Church—a species of interior apostasy to be dealt with in the most rigorous way; and as in the teachings of the masters of the spiritual life, there is, in the temptations

Here is the Sixth Canon of the Council of Nice :

Title: De patriarchâ Magnae Alexandriae.

Ut toti præsideat Ægypto, ejusque provinciis, quemadmodum Romanus et Antiochenus.

Episcopus Ægypti, nimirum Magnae Alexandriae patriarcha, toti præsideat Ægypto et omnibus ejus provinciis adjacentibusque civitatibus eis subjectis, quoniam ita convenit Episcopo Romano, nempe patriarchae successori Petri, ut præsideat etiam omnibus suis provinciis et regioni-



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against faith, as in those against purity, one sole remedy—flight: after a long interior struggle, I determined to fly, and to have nothing more to do with Protestants, to avoid all matters of controversy, and to devote myself exclusively to works of zeal in Catholic countries.

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bus quae ei subjectae sunt. Pariter Episcopus Antiochiaenempe patriarcha ejus praesideat omnibus provinciis et regionibus ei subjectis. In aliis regionibus antiquus servetur mos ecclesiae, nimirum quod in praeterito constitutum et servatum est.

## CHAPTER V.

### FIAT LUX!

THE times were favorable for this purpose. The Secular Jubilee was about to be celebrated in France by missions in the leading churches. I had been invited to take part in several of these missions as preacher and confessor. This now appeared to me providential, the more so as the subjects treated in the pulpit on such occasions, sin, repentance, death, judgment, etc., are almost strangers to controversy. I accepted my invitations, therefore, with a kind of desperate gratitude, and during more than two months passed each day part of my time in the pulpit and confessional.

The time came when, although I had still many engagements, I found myself completely worn out and forced to think of rest. But the rest that my mind craved I could not find. More than ever, from the moment I began to reflect, doubt assailed me. It was there, always present and active in my thoughts; try as I would to turn my mind into other channels, I could not get beyond the reach

of its persistent demands for a hearing. Then it was that the course which until that day had seemed condemnable, now appeared obligatory. Without enlightening any one as to what was passing within me, I resolved to make a serious and candid examination of my faith as a Roman Catholic.

I entered upon this examination by an independent and careful study of the New Testament. I had read the books through so often that I could recite from memory many of their principal passages; but this reading had in view personal edification rather than instruction and doctrinal criticism. Now I approached the sacred writings to be enlightened in a new and broader way—to learn from the lips of the Divine Master of the nature of that kingdom He had come to establish. As I advanced in a reverent study of His teachings, they appeared more and more unlike the claims of His vicar. There, not one of the doctrines upon which Rome lays especial stress and upon the acceptance of which she makes salvation depend, was found to have a warrant in the teachings of Jesus. On the contrary, the spirit of the Master, divinely simple and sublimely humble, appeared in striking contrast with the presumption of those who count themselves His only legitimate successors. The character of Christ and the character of this proud Church—how far apart and

how widely different ! My studies began to force me to irresistible conclusions. At the turn of each new page I seemed to be driven further and further away from my original position. At length, my self-imposed task came to an end, leaving me with the painful knowledge that the teachings of the Church of which I was a member were strangely out of accord with the plain and evident truths of Holy Writ.

After that, recalling the saying of the sage that the best writings on religion were those forbidden by the Congregation of the Index, I allowed myself to pass over this interdiction, and, among other works, I read with a lively interest "*L'Histoire de la Civilisation en Europe et en France*," by M. Guizot. The manifest spirit of sincerity, the largeness of view, the historical science which this work reveals impressed me so deeply and produced such a change in my manner of appreciating things, that I felt sure its talented author could help me in my present dilemma. To unburden myself to this great man, might seem to him a strange tribute to his genius ; yet, so deep was my longing for counsel and guidance just at this time, that I felt such a course was justifiable, and believed that he would not take my confidence amiss. Accordingly, I addressed the following letter to M. Guizot :

“To M. GUIZOT—

“Sir: Another than you might find the step now taken by the most unknown of your admirers indiscreet and daring. The dignity of your character and the elevation of your thoughts are precisely what render me bold and furnish me with an excuse; and I dare promise myself that you will find this letter an indisputable testimony of the confidence that great talents in a great soul can inspire. I have read and re-read, sir, your history of civilization in Europe and in France. I need not say that the study of this immortal work has enchanted me as it has so many others, nor is it with this design that I trace these lines. It is confidences and not compliments that I take the liberty of making you.

“Then, sir, the historical science which your book reveals, the stamp of moderation and sincerity which mark its pages have impressed me vividly, and, to confess it candidly, have, together with similar studies along analogous lines, confirmed me in a grave condition of doubt, by which my mind is deeply distressed. What is doubt to my ignorance, must be certainty to such a mind as yours; otherwise one must despair of a positive knowledge of religious truth here below. I come, then, to pray you, in the name of that large charity with which I know you to be animated, to be so

good as to say one word which may prove a ray of light to me, and show me the path to follow in the crisis in which my soul now finds itself. Here is my question, put as briefly as possible: Do you think that the claims of the Church of Rome, to be the sole, legitimate and infallible interpreter of the doctrines of the Saviour, are both historical and evangelical? In other words: Do you think that a true disciple of Christ ought to be Roman Catholic rather than Protestant?

"You are the first and only person to whom I have opened my heart on this subject, and upon the answer which you will deign to give to this entirely confidential letter, may depend my future. Anxiously awaiting your reply, I am, with deep respect, etc., etc."

This was addressed simply to M. Guizot, Paris, and though I looked anxiously and long for an answer, to my deep disappointment none came. Whether the letter never reached its destination, or whether M. Guizot mistrusted its motive, I had no means of ascertaining.

Not judging it opportune to take any one else into my confidence, I resolved to think and act for myself and on my own responsibility. The more I studied and reflected, the more my faith in the fundamental doctrines of Romanism weakened, and I felt that before long not only my opinions

but also my conscience would impose upon me the duty of abjuration.

As such a step on my part could not but bring me personally the gravest consequences, deeply afflict my best friends, and, worst of all, carry desolation into the bosom of my family, I felt bound to make a last effort by going to Rome and studying the system on the spot, in its immediate application.

As I had not revealed to any of my friends what was passing within me, when they learned that I was preparing to go to the seat of the Roman Church, they entirely misinterpreted the object of this journey and congratulated me on my resolution. Several prelates, the Cardinal Archbishop of Besançon among them, sent me letters of recommendation of the most flattering kind. All supposed I was about to make what is called a pilgrimage *ad limina apostolorum*. They had a natural reason for believing this, as they were aware I had received from the Vatican special privileges and more recently had been extended the widest powers in the matter of indulgences such as the "*Altare privilegiatum personale*," of which I have the titles still in my possession.

In my unsettled condition of mind, it did not seem to me the time to express my fears and

apprehensions, but before setting out upon a path full of trials and uncertainties, I took occasion to give from the pulpit an open declaration of the manner in which I then understood the religion of Jesus. This was the last sermon which I pronounced before a Roman Catholic assembly, and as it reveals my personal appreciation of Christianity at this time, an abstract is here given :

There is a duty founded on nature and imposed by religion, which embraces all others, the faithful fulfillment of which would make of all nations one great family and would be for each of us the principle of the highest virtues and the source of the sweetest enjoyments ; a duty, on the other hand, from the violations of which proceed all the envyings, all the hatreds, all the crimes which devastate the world ;—this duty, so important and so much ignored, is that of Brotherly Love. I shall speak to you of it this morning, my brothers, at this last of our meetings.

To-day, after the example of our Divine Lord, I have come to say at the moment of leaving you : This is my earnest wish, my parting request, that you love one another.

We must acknowledge this heavenly doctrine of fraternal love, though founded on the most pressing wants of the heart and expressing its noblest



aspirations, as a distinctly new doctrine. Before our Saviour came to declare it, human society was divided into two great classes, the one looking with hatred and suspicion on the other. A thousand distinctions created by pride caused an immense chasm between hearts. To bridge this abyss, to obliterate all false distinctions between classes and conditions of men, the Divine One came with the Gospel of universal love: His own peculiar Gospel, a new commandment, as He calls it, because only fully brought to light by the character of His life and the purity of His precepts.

O, turn again to contemplate the greatness of that divine love which inspired the Redeemer's soul, happy earth which He moistened with His sweat, ungrateful Jerusalem over which He shed His tears, guilty Magdalen whose anointing He permitted, little children upon whom He lavished His tenderness, and you mothers, sisters, and desolate wives whose tears He wiped, and you, infirm and afflicted of all sorts, whom He healed, and you, poor whom He honored and helped with His affection, tell us if there has ever lived a heart more loving, more compassionate, more deeply concerned for the happiness of a sinning and suffering people. Surely it was not needed that signs from heaven should testify of His divinity, for the heart which can carry the burdens and sorrows of even

the most forsaken, which can make room for the griefs and toils and cares of the hapless multitude, is filled without measure with the life and love of God.

And this is the reason why He says to His chosen: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." The distinctive mark by which the true disciple is known, is the same mark by which the Master was known,—love. He alone who truly loves his brother is worthy of the honor of being called Christian; it matters not what may be his name, his colors, his symbol. Whether he be a devout Catholic, a priest, a bishop or even a supreme pontiff in the Church of Christ, unless he bears on his heart the stamp of the Saviour's love, he is none of His.

Remember, beloved, what the Samaritans were to the Jews,—an object of contempt and hatred because of their religious differences. The synagogue had anathematized them, so that to the chosen people their very name was an abomination. A learned doctor once asked Jesus: "Master, what must I do to gain eternal life?" The Master replied: "What is written in the law? \* \* \* Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself; this do and thou shalt live." "But who is my neighbor?"

the lawyer asks. My brothers, you recall the answer; it was not the priest or the Levite, for they shamefully passed the wounded traveller by. It was the schismatic, the excommunicated, the hated Samaritan who stopped and took the bleeding man in his arms, pouring oil into his wounds, and setting him upon his own beast. To a neighboring inn he carried him and commended him to the host as his own brother. Nor does he leave him until he has provided fully for his wants. This good Samaritan, though a religious outcast, rejected by the synagogue and despised by the Jews, is he upon whom the Son of God looked with favor—he who has fulfilled the divine precept, he who will possess eternal life.

And how admirably was this great lesson learned by the first disciples of the Master! It is St. John, the one who had formerly asked that fire might descend from heaven to destroy these very Samaritans, who finally learned his Master's lesson so completely that he never tired of repeating these beautiful words: "Love one another." It is St. Paul who, though formerly a Pharisee of the strictest sect of the Jews, cried out in a sublime ecstasy of feeling: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." How great must have been the surprise when

this new-born society of believers appeared in the world ! They seemed as new men who had but one heart and one soul, who sought no other glory than that of being useful, no other interest but the interest of all. At this spectacle men awoke and hearts were moved. "See how these Christians love one another," the pagans exclaimed, and those who resisted the eloquent message of the apostles, and that more eloquent still of the martyrs, found themselves at last won over by the influence of a fraternity until then unknown.

O, days of our greatness, why have you so quickly vanished ! Holy Religion, thou appearest still to reign in the world ; thy worship is beautiful, thy solemnities are imposing, thy altars are brilliant, but it is only the semblance of a greatness and of a power that are no more ! O heavenly Charity, come down and reign anew in our midst, that hatred and envy may disappear from amongst those who bear the name of Christ—that we may at length see every veil of division swept away and the old barriers of pride and prejudice broken down—that all men everywhere may be gathered into one fold under one shepherd and learn anew the joy of worshipping God as members of one divine family ! O precious gift of love, come and fill our hearts, bring heaven down to earth again, so that we may pursue our course here below as

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citizens of a heavenly kingdom ; and grant us so to live under thy holy inspiration, that when our last summons comes, we may commit our souls into the hands of God with the prayer: O our Judge, who art also our Father, forgive us as we have forgiven others, and let the sentence which shall determine our destiny be dictated by mercy as our own feelings and acts have been ruled by charity !

## CHAPTER VI.

### IN ROME.

IT was my intention to remain six months in the Holy City. Circumstances compelled me to leave in one month. Yet, during that brief period, I saw and learned enough to satisfy me that the Capital of the Roman world was the last place for one to visit in my frame of mind. It may be that I was not in a condition to judge impartially. Perhaps the temper of my thoughts was over-critical, too susceptible to adverse impressions. I had resolved, it is true, to investigate fearlessly and study frankly all that bore upon my religious position. Nevertheless every private interest, home-ties, the love and respect of friends, present position and future prospects, would naturally have induced me to see things in their most favorable light. If the facts were to lead me to separate from the Church of Rome, it would be only because the facts were too glaring and emphatic to be glossed over.

I pass by the vexations to which we were subjected on arriving at Civita Vecchia at the hands

of the gendarmes, the custom's officers and the countless horde of faquini. Suffice it to say that rather than to render any useful service, the aim of this hungry mob seemed to be to make our way as unpleasant and expensive as possible. Our passports proved a fruitful source of revenue to the many who pretended to a right to examine them. No doubt we were found to be easy victims of this sort of brigandage, and I confess that our surprise and disgust was so great, that we failed to make a vigorous protest. We reached the Eternal City at last, poorer in pocket but richer in experience.

Having settled in fairly comfortable lodgings, I proceeded to make myself familiar with the city. The churches first absorbed my attention. What shall I say of their dignity and splendor, their wealth and magnificence? What shall I say of the vast number of monks and priests and prelates who throng these stately buildings and testify to the power and prestige of this great Church and lend an air of grandeur to its ancient seat? Certainly here the religion of Jesus should be at its best. Here we should find the purest morality and the deepest spiritual life. Here charity and good works, the distinctive marks of the disciples of Christ, should abound without measure. Rome should lead the world

in all that is noble and holy and gracious in religion.

The pain of a bitter disenchantment was in store for me. I had been but a short time in the city when a revolting sense of the unreality of its religious life took possession of me. Every day seemed to deepen that unwelcome impression. I found myself going from place to place in increasing amazement at the squalor and ignorance and vice visible and openly present at each new turn. Instead of righteousness and piety and a sweet reverence among the people, coarseness and uncleanness and degrading superstition. Education and self-respect, these choice fruits of Christianity, where had they concealed themselves? On the one hand, the luxury of the prelates; on the other, the profound misery of the people; on this side, churches of surpassing stateliness; on that, homes of the poor, unspeakable in their filthiness; here, a cleric in gorgeous attire; there, a beggar in hideous and noisome rags. How could I escape the shameful meaning of such a contrast! One would, indeed, have had to be a slave to prejudice to overlook this disgusting travesty of the religion of Him who came to preach the Gospel to the poor, to heal the broken hearted, to set at liberty those who are bruised.

And what do these men do—this multitude of



priests? I asked myself again and again. Do they not see the wretched condition of the people—and have they no concern for the public distress and ignorance and immorality? I could not discover a single sign of a real and genuine interest in such matters, nor did I learn of any organized effort to lift these people from their hapless plight. The dignitaries of the Church were occupied with other things. Their time was taken up with affairs of a more imposing nature. Resplendent ceremonies now at this altar, now at that; the keeping of great festivals and the observance of great occasions. The city seemed wholly given up to idolatry and enamored with the spectacle of an elaborate worship. Even this might mean something, did it only inspire the people with a deeper reverence and regard for sacred things. But it was evident that even these solemn functions possessed no real solemnity—it was not an awe of God that held the crowd, but a stupid wonder and admiration of those gorgeously robed men who served at the altar. At St. Peter's, St. Jean de Latran, St. Paul extra Muros, Santa Trinita del Monte it was always the same, a wanton display of religious pomp and ceremonial without heart, without devotion, without any spiritual reality.

On Christmas I attended the midnight office at St. Maria Maggiore. The church was dazzling with

lights and ornaments, the ceremony was most pretentious. Among all the princes of the Church, I liked the appearance of the Pope alone. His face was sympathetic, and he seemed embarrassed by the many singular honors conferred upon him.

The assembly had more the appearance of taking part in a worldly gathering than a religious service. The frivolity of the people, their free conversation, prevented one from believing that they were conscious of being in a holy place. One is permitted to doubt if a single soul carried away any feeling of edification.

The feast of the Epiphany found me at the Sistine Chapel. What a spectacle is that mass in the presence of the Pope! The chamberlains grouped like dogs at the feet of their masters, the cardinals; the officiating clergy carelessly lolling on the altar steps in their sacerdotal vestments, during the preaching, turning their backs upon the cross and the tabernacle. Then that meaningless series of perfunctory honors, kissing of hands, kissing of the feet of the Pope, which seems to be given in lieu of the homage due to Christ in the Host upon the altar. Nothing to remind one that this is the House of God. The triple pontifical crown everywhere, on the walls right and left, at the entrance and in the sanctuary, tells the story truly. It is not the

cross of Christ but the crown of the Pontiff that these people reverence.

I came away from this service resolved to follow the direction of my own conscience, cost what it might. It was then that an unforeseen incident happened which served to help me in this decision. I was boarding in a family whose chief religious devotion seemed to consist in reciting the rosary together in order to obtain a favorable number at the Tombola. These people knew that I was a priest, and having observed that, unlike other priests, I did not say the daily mass, they indicated in many ways that they were suspicious of my orthodoxy. I had reason to believe that they would not keep this suspicion to themselves, and so it seemed well to me to seek another lodging.

Finding on the door of a house on the Piazza di Spagna, the notice "*Chambres à louer*," I entered and ascended the stairs to examine them. As I passed through the hall, my eye was caught by a door-plate bearing the inscription "*Rev. Charles Baird, Chaplain of the American Legation.*" This discovery seemed to me providential. I had never conversed with a Protestant minister. In obedience to a strange impulse, I knocked and entered. Mr. Baird himself was within and received me with marked politeness. I was a stranger to this man, and yet I found myself in a few moments

explaining to him my peculiar position. His evident sympathy and kindness inspired me to tell him all. And I felt more than repaid for my confidence by the affectionate and tender way he received it. After a few comforting and encouraging words, he said: "You cannot doubt of my profound sympathy in the religious crisis to which you have been led, and I shall be happy to meet and talk with you again; but it cannot be in this place. Everything which passes in my apartment is watched. Only a few weeks ago a monk, tormented as you now are by doubt, and who had come to confer with me two or three times, disappeared. I have not heard from him or of him since; and I would not be surprised if it is already known that you are here. Do not return to these rooms. I will appoint a place of meeting where there will not be the same risk." I promised to do as Mr. Baird had told me and left him my address.

Some days later, as I was walking from the "Jesu" to the Capitol, where two streets cross, I was suddenly accosted by two men, who threw themselves upon me, and while one covered my mouth to prevent an outcry, the other rifled my pockets. I supposed my purse had been taken, but no, it was safe! My portfolio, containing precious papers, my passport and

letters of recommendation, from the Archbishop of Besançon among them, was gone. I went at once to the police prefecture, hard by, and asked to speak to the prefect himself. I told him what had occurred, and he expressed surprise. He inquired if there was any money or money-order in my portfolio. I told him there was not—nothing but private papers and letters, valuable to me, but useless to any one else. Thereupon this worthy officer said: "If these men are ordinary thieves and find that its contents are of no value to them, they will likely bring them to us: you had better leave with us some little indemnity to pay them for their trouble."

This affair seemed to me more serious than I had thought at first, and without further delay I sought the office of the French ambassador. Happily, he knew me, being, as I was, a member of the "Cercle Catholique." At first he seemed glad to see me; but when I told him what had just happened, his countenance grew grave. "Allow me to ask you a question," he said: "How do you stand from a religious point of view?" I thought it right to tell him frankly the reason for my presence in Rome. "That truly grieves me," he said. "You know I am a Catholic. Nevertheless, in the present case, I must act as an ambassador of France. I know you to be a reputable

citizen: I shall give you a new passport on this condition:—you must leave Rome in twenty-four hours. During that time I take you under my protection, but if you remain longer, I will not be responsible for the outcome." He then told me the experience of the Abbé Laborde who had been sent by the Archbishop of Paris to protest against the proclamation of the new dogma of the Immaculate Conception. Upon his arrival he was speedily taken in hand and shut up in the Château St. Ange. His liberation was only secured after severe threats on the part of the French Government.

After leaving the ambassador with this assurance of protection, I went at once to Mr. Baird. "What has happened does not surprise me," he said, upon learning of my misadventure. "Well, now that you are in security for twenty-four hours longer, we can see something of you. Come to-morrow to our service at ten o'clock. Afterwards we shall breakfast together, and at one o'clock you can take the diligence for Civita Vecchia." I acted according to the desire of my new friend, in whom I was happy to find a true Christian gentleman, and on the morrow, which was Sunday, I attended for the first time a Protestant service and that in the very centre of Romanism. Since my arrival in the Holy City, this was the only

occasion when I was truly edified and comforted by a religious service. In the simplicity and manifest sincerity of that brief period of devotion, I found what I had failed to find in all the pomp and ceremony of the great churches—an atmosphere of reverence and faith, a worship of God in spirit and in truth.

My last impressions before leaving the Papal City have been written thus :

JESUS AND HIS PRETENDED VICAR:—The Pope pretends to be vicar of Christ ; he is in fact the opposite. Jesus has said : “ Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart. I did not come to be served, but to serve.” The Pope pretends that every human creature, even sovereigns, must bow down before him as his humblest servants. Jesus has said : “ My kingdom is not of this world ;” the Pope pretends to reign over the whole world. Jesus never dogmatized ; the Pope formulates and promulgates dogmas to which every human soul should subscribe. On the day of his greatest triumph Christ entered Jerusalem mounted on an ass, amidst the acclamations of the poor he had come to evangelize ; the Pope enters St. Peter’s carried on a magnificent throne by prelates magnificently dressed. Jesus had not where to lay his head ; the Pope has for his mansion the most magnificent palace ever built, and it is not enough for

him. Jesus never wore any crown but a crown of thorns ; the Pope wears on all solemn occasions a triple crown of gold enriched and ornamented with precious stones of every kind.

And now, adieu, Rome ; adieu forever ! Where I go, I know not. The Master has said : " Seek and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. He that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. \* \* \* Lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the world."

Jesus is love ; the Pope is power, and, as in his pretended supreme power I can no longer see anything but a sacrilegious usurpation, to free myself from it becomes a sacred duty ; and in the name of God, for truth's sake, that duty I perform this ninth day of January, 1854.



## CHAPTER VII.

### IN ENGLAND AGAIN.

SINCE the hour of my departure from Rome I decided to keep a daily record of my thoughts and experiences. This journal was destined to become my faithful friend and confidential companion. To its pages I committed without fear or reserve the reflections which engaged my mind from time to time, the impressions made upon me by my contact with men, and the ideas which specially interested me. Henceforth in this narrative I shall draw freely from its pages and ask my readers to accept what it has to tell them as not always the settled convictions of its author, but rather as the views and impressions which commended themselves to him at the time of writing. There are many phases in one's religious experience, many and various shades of thought and opinion which one must needs pass through before he arrives at a stable and permanent position. If the ideas here to be expressed seem inconsistent with my attitude on the same subjects to-day, let it be kept in mind that they were the moods

through which I passed before I reached my present point of view. Some will commend themselves as essentially true, others as only partially so, yet all will represent the free and open thoughts of one who tried to deduce some living principle from the experiences which met him in the course of a varied and unsettled career.

With this word of explanation, let me resume my story.

January 12, 1854.

I was standing at the bow of the steamer which was carrying us from Civita Vecchia to Marseilles, casting a last look at the States of that Church to which yesterday I had said good-bye forever. I was reviewing in my mind the eventful series of observations and circumstances which had so painfully affected me during my sojourn in the city which until then I had reverently called the Holy City, when a clergyman of distinguished appearance, whom I had not noticed before, approached me, and after a few polite words asked me, with the accent of a true interest, what was the subject of my rêverie. I felt moved to tell him candidly the thoughts which were passing through my mind. "Oh, sir," said I, "you who come from Rome, like myself, you who seem to be an honorable man, you who are a Catholic and a priest,

have you not seen how, in Rome, in the capital of the Christian world, the very heart of the Church, have you not seen how everywhere superstition holds the place of religion, how the representatives of Him who has said, 'Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart,' are full of pride, thirsting for power and wealth, how they over-reach the poor, how they have corrupted the moral sense of the people, how, in order to master them more surely, they keep them in ignorance and abjection? Oh, father, it is doubly sad when one has been brought up in the bosom of the Roman Church and has counted it his highest duty to devote himself to her service, to be obliged to acknowledge that he has been profoundly mistaken in her character."

The reverend father, who did not know me, and could not understand the gravity of my last words, did not try to deny or attenuate the truth of what I had just said. "Yes," he replied, "I was surprised and distressed by it, and I deplore it as you do. Meanwhile, looking at things as we should, from the point of view of salvation, these poor Romans are not so much to be pitied. Their religion is little edifying, I admit, and they have scarcely any idea of morality; but there remains, for all this, an ample compensation." "And what may that be?" I exclaimed. "They have

faith," he replied. Thus, in the thought of this good man, faith, faith alone (and what manner of faith!) stood for all virtues, for all that is good.

I remember at this moment having heard at the Oratory in London the celebrated Dr. Newman place in the first rank among the nations, not the English, not the French, but these same people of the Roman States, for the sole reason that, while inferior in everything else, they excelled all others in faith. Yet it is precisely this sort of faith which is to be condemned, it is their superstitious credulity which has made them what they are. Instead of being the faith that saves, it is the faith that ruins. "Ye shall know them by their fruits," the Master said. A tree which bears such fruit can only be a corrupt tree, and having found it I have acted accordingly.

January 15.

This morning I reached Paris, which I found more magnificent than ever. An intoxicating city—no ennui is possible here. Yet its gaiety and brightness do not agree with my present thoughts. He who seeks excitement and distraction might be happy here; for one who craves calm and time for meditation, London is better. Its fogs, the solidity of its people, the solitude in which one is

permitted to live, favor reflection and sober thought—I must press on to London.

My arrival in London recalled the circumstances which had first inspired me to doubt the validity of the Roman claims. While I was not yet ready to inform my family and friends of the change in my position, it seemed to me that a duty was owing the gentleman whose ardent appeal had prompted me to begin the investigation which had finally led to the surrender of my faith in the Church of my fathers. Accordingly I addressed the following letter to Mr. Charles Hastings Collette :

“London, January 27, 1854.

“Sir :

“You have been the first instrument made use of by divine Providence to open my eyes to the truth ; it is, therefore, right that I should inform you first of the happy change which has taken place in my ideas and in my heart.

“I will confess that it has been hard for me to acknowledge, even from your very positive indications, not that I was deceived, but that the most esteemed Roman theologians deceive us, or rather, deceive themselves. Forced to give in to evidence of the falsity of one of the principal texts quoted in the second pamphlet, I tried to take refuge in the others, which were numerous and

seemed to me conclusive. Alas! without much trouble, you have shown that they did not merit greater confidence than the first.

"I then threw myself upon history. In the historical writings of the first Christian ages, I sought some decisive facts in favor of the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, that is to say, some historical ground for the papacy. Here also I was disappointed! Against the few texts which have been rendered favorable, but which by themselves are insignificant or doubtful, I found a number which were manifestly contrary to my position. So I was obliged to admit that if your articles at times left something to be desired as to their form, in substance, at least, they sustained your position and established the validity of your argument. The matter of our controversy was too serious, and I brought too much sincerity into it, that I should think of defending myself by mere tricks.

"The historical and critical inquiry to which your attacks led me was followed by other studies no less important. When I saw that the Roman pretensions could not stand up before history, I asked myself if they had not some solid foundation in the Gospels, and surely it was a great day in my life when, after a long mental struggle, I determined to examine the Gospels in an open and independent spirit. Many times had I read the

New Testament through, but only for the sake of edification, and always with the determination never to find in the sacred text other meaning than that given by the Roman Church. This time I resolved to trust to the light of reason, aided by prayer. Now, sir, hardly had I scanned a few chapters in this spirit, when I found, with a kind of stupefaction, a doctrine which seemed to me the very condemnation of the Roman system. The limits of this letter do not permit me to enter into particulars, but I dare to challenge any one to read the Gospel as I have done—with an open mind and honest heart, seeking for and loving the truth above all else—and not to come to the same conclusions.

“I could have stopped there ; it seemed to me I had a right, with the knowledge I had already gained, to reject the claims of Rome. Nevertheless, in order that in so grave a matter I could never be accused of having acted hastily, I felt it my duty to try a last experiment. Therefore I set out for Rome, with a view to judging the system on the spot, and in its immediate application. And now, sir, I speak frankly to you when I say that if there remains any mystery to me, it is to conceive how an honest man can visit Rome, study its religious life with an impartial mind, and remain a Roman Catholic. Everywhere superstition

usurps the place of religion ; instead of works of piety, one is pained and indignant to see an odious traffic in things called sacred, shameful speculations on the faith of the simple, ceremonies which carry one back to the days of pagan Rome, man receiving honors due to God alone. On the one hand, the arrogance and luxury of the princes of the Church ; on the other, the ignorance and degradation of the people whom they have moulded, and in whose heart it is hard to find an honest and generous sentiment.

“Sir, I only remained four weeks in Rome, and it was, as it proved, well for me not to have stayed longer. For hardly had I spent a few days there, before I fancied I heard sounding unceasingly in my ears that mysterious voice which is said to have been heard in the temple at Jerusalem some time before its ruin, ‘Let us depart hence, let us depart hence!’

“It is in the free land of Great Britain that I have taken refuge, and here I propose to continue my studies in the interest of truth, trusting the time may come when I shall be able to write more openly, in order to help my blind brothers to a share with me in the light of the divine grace.

“Pray accept the expression of my grateful and respectful feelings.

“C. MIEL.”



This letter was not designed for publication ; nevertheless, Mr. Collette thought it his duty to spread it as widely as possible, both for the good it might accomplish and also in my own interests. A French translation of it shortly reached my friends in France. This I learned through letters which came to me from all quarters. Those who had known me before this step, urged me to confront the authors of what they called an odious publication, for all refused to believe what they had heard. "No," wrote one, whose letter lies before me as I write, "that must be an infamous calumny ; you, so pious ; a priest according to God ; you, so devoted to the Holy Mother," etc., etc. "We only ridicule this story," writes another, "which is a Protestant calumny, and I, who know you so well, guarantee your Catholicity as a priest after God's own heart. Hasten only and tell us what can have given rise to so absurd a report." "It is impossible to tell you," a third says, "what a sad effect this fearful accusation against you has had on me. No, God forbid that I should believe it. The idea alone of so horrible a crime makes me shudder. This letter which has been attributed to you is only an atrocious invention. The sincerity of your faith and your ardor in defending it are a sure guarantee to us. Is it not your first duty to protest against

an imputation so odious by an article in the papers attesting your faithfulness to the Church of Rome?"

It is needless to say how deeply I was moved by these evidences of confidence on the part of my poor, but always dear, friends. It was the most painful task of my life to be obliged to disabuse them.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### BREAKING CLOSE TIES.

UNABLE to answer each one in particular, for the number of their letters increased daily, I wrote a general reply which I dispatched to all, adding to it such further words as the letter of each of my correspondents particularly required.

Here is my answer :—

“ My Very Dear Friends :—

“ It has pleased God, no doubt for my greater good, to call me for some time past to endure hard trials, but none do I more sensibly feel than the thought of being a source of pain to so many estimable persons, who, like you, have regarded me with affection, and whom for my part I shall always love.

“ Yet, when the question is one of honor and conscience, should any consideration of personal interest or even of affection restrain us ? Is it not written that we must obey God rather than men ? This is why I could not avoid taking a step which I knew beforehand would not be understood by

the greater number, but on the contrary, would be severely blamed by those whose approbation is particularly precious to me.

"It is true, dear friends, that I am the author of the letter which has so much shocked you, and which was reproduced and spread without my knowledge. It was written under the painful impression of my journey to Rome, and though I might to-day give it a somewhat different form, I would not disavow a single line of it, for all that I have since learned has confirmed the ideas I then formed.

"I know how such a change must surprise you ; it surprises me more than I can say. But the more I reflect, the more I am forced to recognize God's hand in it, and at His call to sacrifice at a single stroke an advantageous and honorable position as well as a future which announced itself in seducing colors. I was constrained to take this step, even though it might weaken the affection of friends and the deep devotion of my parents, to whose comfort I have until now consecrated all my resources ; yes, even though it might oblige me to forego the affectionate embrace of my loving mother, whom perhaps I shall not be permitted to see again.

Try to believe, my dear friends, that when one acts so, not by sudden impulse but by deliberate

steps and after long months of reflection, never allowing the preoccupation of difficulties which await you in a new and unknown path to affect your motives, when your resolution is at last taken it must be because you feel yourself commanded to do it by a voice stronger than all the voices of nature.

“Looking at things from the point of view of human honor merely, you will agree with me that after a labor of nearly two years, inspired by a pure love of truth and pursued under the eye of God alone, I was gradually brought to the conviction that the Roman institution is nothing but the work of men, the greatest edifice of their pride, the question with me was reduced to these terms: either lose everything human and act as an honest man, or save everything and live as a hypocrite. Heaven helping me, I chose the first part, and I feel convinced that in my place you would have acted as I did.

“Now, if it is your wish to know particularly what those influences were which wrought so profound a change in my convictions, let me give the details in the same spirit of sincerity which you have been good enough to believe was the inspiration of my previous conduct.

“You have, without doubt, not forgotten that, finding myself in England at the time of the

re-establishment of the Roman hierarchy, and being deeply moved by the anti-papal demonstrations to which this measure gave rise, I dared to raise my feeble voice in behalf of the papacy, and published two pamphlets, which obtained the approbation and praise of eminent ecclesiastics.

“These publications were so sharply attacked by the opposite party, and my authorities were so severely criticised, that I began a more serious study of the writings of the Fathers, of the history of the Church, and especially of authentic memoirs of the first Christian ages. How far was I, my good friends, from foreseeing the results of this study! What surprise, what disenchantment was in store for me, and also what agony when I learned that my chief opponent was right, and that the most important facts and letters produced by Rome in support of her pretensions have been invented or altered in her favor! It was, as a consequence of this unexpected discovery, that doubt for the first time presented itself to my mind.

“During several months I tried to dismiss the feeling by prescribed acts of faith. My labors were in vain; the more I tried to draw back, the more doubt beset me. The power of this disturbing enemy seemed to increase with my efforts to conquer it. Oh! if you but knew how cruel were my sufferings in this war of conscience and

reason; the means of all kinds to which I had recourse to find rest of mind and soul! This was the cause of my sudden departure from England; the reason of my retreat in a house of the Jesuits, where I spent six hours daily in meditation and prayer; the reason of that feverish energy which you admired during those three months of missionary labor.

"Well, dear friends, all this proved in vain. More than ever was I beset by doubt, and, unable to live any longer with so importunate a guest, I resolved to dismiss my fears and know the truth at any price. I felt the moment had come to examine with independence and impartiality, under the eye of God, the foundation of my belief. Believing that nothing should hinder me in this search, I put aside the decrees of the Index and similar restrictions and set myself to examine scrupulously the monuments of history and religious criticism in so far as they bore upon the legitimacy of the Church of Rome's claim to be the infallible and sole interpreter of Christian doctrine. Oh! what important facts I discovered, dear friends, which, like you, I never even imagined to exist! What mysteries were cleared up for my poor mind which until now had been blindly credulous! As I advanced in my labors, in the same measure the horizon of my thoughts

seemed to enlarge. The simplest things assumed a new aspect, and as the reasonableness of history began to appear, the edifice of my former faith began to crumble, until at last the Roman institution seemed to me nothing but a progressive and gigantic usurpation on the part of man of the rights and authority of God.

“ But what completed the dissipation of my illusion and proved to be the study of all others which was to bring me the most light, was the study of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Like all of you, I had read the New Testament through many times, but, like you, I had never studied it. I had sought in it an element of piety, but never a foundation of doctrine. This kind of study had been forbidden, as you well know, by the Church of which I was a minister. I now understand the meaning of that interdiction. Rome is afraid of the Bible, and for this reason she has made blind submission to her authority the base of faith. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is a living and permanent protest against what she teaches concerning herself. If there is a message I have to give to you as the result of my experience, it is the same which was addressed to St. Augustine : *Tolle et lege* ; take and read, with open mind and sincere heart, read the sacred text, study it, taste it ; compare the two teachings, put both doctrines side by



side, that of Jesus Christ and that of the Pope, and then tell me in all conscience if there is any conformity between them, any agreement or harmony possible? You can now see that the step which surprised and distressed you, was not only a very serious one but also a matter of conscience. Do not imagine that I have ceased to be Roman in order to become sectarian. I desire to be simply Christian in the truest sense of the word; Christian according to the Gospel and according to the type ordained by Jesus Himself.

“It is time, my dear friends, to bring this letter to a close. I have written in entire frankness. You will appreciate this evidence of confidence, and I dare hope that you will not be of those who believe it a duty to break off all relations with me. Write me all you think desirable, and upon whatever subject you please, no matter even if it will be impossible for me to agree with you. I shall accept your views with gratitude, without doubting either your sincerity or the amiability of your intentions. Do not fear to find in me either obstinacy or insurmountable prejudices. The truth is all that I seek—the idol which I love with passion, and to which I feel as if I could never refuse any sacrifice. How happy I should be, my good friends, if these circumstances, so little foreseen three years since, far from dividing our hearts or

diminishing our affection for one another, should only serve to bring us new light, and provoke a deeper love between us. May our Lord make us more and more partakers of the grace and truth which dwell only in Him! Let us seek Him, let us serve Him, let us love Him, as vying with each other, and let us love one another in Him and for Him. Those affections are blessed whose centre is in God and whose end is in heaven.

“To you all and with all my heart,  
“C. MIEL.”

With the exception of my true and always loyal friend, M. l'Abbé Paul Perny, of whom I have already spoken, no one honored me with a reply to this letter. At this I was at first as pained as surprised. Afterwards I learned that the ecclesiastical authority had enjoined upon those calling themselves my friends not only not to write to me, but never to read any letter from me. A single one believed that he could be exempt from this order, and sought to win me back by making the following appeal to my filial love: “Your family, formerly so happy and so proud of you, is now plunged into a humiliation and desolation which nothing can equal. Your sisters cease not to weep; your father, at the first news of the fatal defection, in a fit of passion, seized the frame, which

you remember and which you so much valued, that contained the official document of extraordinary powers given you by the Pope and signed by his own hand, and trampled it to pieces. The state of your mother is precarious, and makes one's heart bleed. She remains constantly on her knees, trembling and asking pardon for you \* \*”

Needless to say, this touched the most sensitive chord, and plunged me into a state of mind bordering on despair.

What can I do then, O my God, to soften the bitter grief with which I have filled the hearts of those who love me so tenderly? Ah! if my conscience would permit me to accede to their wishes; if, at least, they could read my heart! How can I tell them so that they can understand me? My most affectionate letters are more of a torture than a consolation to them. What a position! Here, not one person who cares enough for me to tempt me to unburden my soul, and at home, the despair of those who have until now regarded me with so deep and so tender an affection.

O my God, behold me at thy feet alone before Thee. I have none but Thee, O Lord. My mind, my heart, my soul, all my being thirsts for Thee. Let no sacrifice be too great to keep me from Thee. Be my refuge and defence. Forget my unfaithfulness without measure, and only think of

thy mercy. It seems to me that I am resolved to refuse Thee nothing, but if I am the prey to some illusion, if in thy justice Thou hast punished my prevarication and my pride by the blindness of my mind, O my God, O my Father, pardon! grace! I deplore all my wanderings, those I know and those I know not of. I reproach myself in bitterness for the ill use which I have made of thy favors, so precious and so many. Lord, forget the past; teach me what I must do for Thee, for truth, for the greater good of my soul. And if, as they imagine, it is pride or some secret sin which holds me under its dark empire, O my Father, make me humble and little before Thee; help me to shake off the yoke of error and all seduction. Some of thy most zealous servants are ashamed of me. Let my conduct testify that I have had in view only the accomplishment of thy holy will. Let me live to be forever wholly thine!

## CHAPTER IX.

### NEW FRIENDS.

IT was my desire and intention while in London to continue my studies in the pursuit of religious truth. Here I had begun my investigation, and here I believed I could carry it on to a point where I might feel measurably certain of myself from a religious point of view. But it was not long before I discovered that my mind was in no condition to follow such a course. The trying experience of the past months had left their mark upon me. But more than this, the thought of this gigantic Roman institution, which I had venerated and served as divine with all the ardor of my soul, and which at last appeared as a huge imposture, seemed to overwhelm me and haunted my mind like a painful vision from which I could withdraw neither my eyes nor my thoughts. I did not realize then that many years would elapse before this intense reaction in thought and feeling could be entirely obliterated.

Meanwhile it was necessary to find an occupation, and in this I was generously aided by my

former opponent in controversy, Mr. Charles Hastings Collette. Under his auspices, I made the acquaintance of many excellent people, chief among them the Hon. John MacGregor, author of "The Voyage Alone in the Yawl Rob Roy," etc. Mr. MacGregor will be remembered as a pioneer in philanthropic work among the homeless boys of London. My introduction to him was also my first experience of a phase of Protestantism of which until then I had been wholly ignorant. To one who had thought works of zeal and charity limited almost exclusively to the Roman Church, it came as a kind of revelation to find in Protestant London eighteen hundred devoted men and women giving to the poor religious and primary instruction simply for the good of the thing and without the hope of material advantage. The work of the Savoyards in Paris, and that of the Society of St. Vincent de Paule cannot surpass this in fervor and benevolence.

It was my good fortune to meet also about this time the Rev. Dr. Carpenter, of Manchester, afterwards Bishop of Sodor and Man. At his invitation, I spent several weeks in his city and was frequently in his charming company. Had circumstances favored it, I might have continued there, simply in order to remain in communion with such a truly Christian mind.

Determined, however, not to accept any favor which might be offered in consideration of my present state of mind, I resolved to act independently, and had already settled upon teaching as my vocation and French literature as my subject. Under the advice of my new friends, I decided upon Dublin as a more fruitful field for such employment than overcrowded London. Accordingly, well supplied with letters, I set out for that city.

My experience in Dublin was most encouraging. From the first, Archbishop Whately honored me with his friendship and kindly patronage. A man of higher cultivation and less pretension, it has not been my pleasure to meet. A frequent visitor and guest, I had abundant opportunity to enjoy his conversation and profit by his broad learning and large experience. His books, copies of which he gave me, won my admiration by their literary purity, but above all by the liberal views expressed in them.

Under the patronage of Dr. Whately and such excellent people as Lady Macgregor, Sir Benjamin Guinness and many others, it was not long before my literary conferences had an assured success. The first was given in the Royal Irish Academy, but for the second it was necessary to find a larger hall. Fortune seemed to smile upon

my little enterprise, and as far as my temporal needs were concerned, I felt secure against the future.

Yet, strange as it may seem, this did not satisfy me. A constrained feeling had begun to take possession of me, suggested by a fear lest the obligations I was under to my new friends should lead me to take a step I was not prepared to make. I was not willing to compromise my liberty by a course which might permit any one to believe that they had a claim upon me. Nor, on the other hand, was I disposed to pose as a possible candidate for denominationalism, ready to accede to the most favorable inducement. This fear was not altogether ungrounded, notwithstanding at the time I may have magnified it, and the thought that I might be occupying a false position made me restless. Rather than be the object of attentions which might eventually prompt me to abridge my religious freedom, I determined to adventure into a new field.

The following selections from my journal express more intimately my feelings at the time :

June, 1854.

Here I am in Dublin. Nowhere have I found such religious agitation. The celebrated Gavazzi is here. I have received this morning an invitation



to meet and dine with him. I have declined. That man does not suit me. I heard him a few weeks ago at Exeter Hall, where he was giving a lecture on the papacy. His language, loaded with invectives, is that of hatred. His object seemed to be to excite the malice and prejudice of those who listen to him. No, Christ is not there. But He is somewhere else. A very different type of man interests himself in Roman Catholics here, but in a spirit of true charity : the Rev. Mr. Dallas, a navy captain formerly, and lately ordained to the Anglican ministry. He now devotes himself entirely to the evangelization of those who do not any longer believe in Rome. Of all the English clergymen I have heard thus far, Mr. Dallas speaks out of the fullest heart, and knows best how to interest his audience.

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I have attended these last days various meetings of controversy between Romanists and Anglicans. Here are the impressions they have made on me : I distrust every individual who defends his cause with great effort of lungs. It looks as if he needed to stun you in order to obtain your assent. I am also suspicious of the one who says on all occasions : "That is evident, nothing more manifest," etc. When a thing is evident, it is needless to say so ; and if one says so, it is likely

because it is not. The complaints of a controversialist who thinks his adversary is wanting in a proper regard for him personally, are also distasteful to me. Generally such pleadings are a way of escape, revealing the weakness of a man who is unable to answer the arguments of his opponent and finds himself reduced to accusing his methods. What I find wanting in the Roman controversialists thus far is perfect candor. They forget that assertions are not reasons, and that truth should create authority, and not authority make truth.

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An evidence of the little faith there is in the world is the idea that is entertained generally of those who abandon a religion which they have found to be false for one they count to be true. They are despised, sometimes insulted, called apostates, renegades, etc.; and the reason, because they have surrendered the religion of their fathers. The argument seems a decisive one. So that St. Paul and the other apostles must have been wrong to abandon Judaism, and they are to be counted apostates before all others. In the same way our ancestors who renounced paganism must have been wrong, and should have continued to render divine honors to Jupiter, Teutates, etc. Do you not see, O men of little faith, that your principles are destruc-

tive of all religion, that they suppose religious truth not to exist in this world, and that the daughter of Lusignan was right when Voltaire made her say :

“J’eusse été près du Gange, esclave des faux dieux,  
Chrétienne dans Paris, Musulmane en ces lieux.”

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I feel obliged to acknowledge this: Whoever comes from Rome has to conciliate the favor of any number of Protestants by two sure methods equally repugnant to me. The first invites one to play the hypocrite. Do you wish to make yourself considered as a truly converted man? you do not need to show approved virtue, tender piety, ardent charity, deep convictions; it is enough to say with a certain air of compunction: “I have read the Bible, which I discovered by chance. After reading that divine book the Holy Spirit made me realize that I was nothing but a miserable sinner, unable to do any good thing. Then I deeply felt the need of a Saviour, and that Saviour I have found, and now I believe in Him and enjoy a full assurance of my salvation.” This language has a decisive effect among certain of the orthodox.

The second means to gain favor with fanatical Protestants is no less effective. It is to declare

oneself as an open enemy of Rome and all things Roman. Now, for my part, I cannot forget that, in spite of all the error and all the excesses justly ascribed to Rome, to her I owe the sweetest and purest emotions of my youth, and to villify her would be an odious thing, even though she has ceased to be the holy and divine institution to whose service I should have been so happy to devote my life.

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My feelings are modified more and more, thanks to God, by a sense of charity. During my stay in Rome, I experienced hardly anything but indignation. Now I feel for the victims of error and prejudice, whoever they may be, a tender compassion. This need not blind me to the truth nor dim my sight to the glaring discrepancies between the Church of Rome and the Church of Christ.

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Romanism is domination ; Protestantism is division. True Christianity is the union of all the children of God in liberty, in the love of truth, and in the practice of charity.

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If one should ask me to-day which is the most respectable of the Christian Churches, I think I should answer : "The Church of England." She

has a ministry which seems to me superior to any other in education, and her faithful commend themselves generally by the regularity of their lives and the purity of their manners. Moreover, she is liberal enough to admit of a high, a low and a broad Church. The fact that the two Newmans have been formed by her, that men as different from each other as Stanley and Pusey enjoy equally her favor, is a striking evidence of the latitude of views she permits. I do not mean by this that the Anglican Communion is the true Church. Is there a true Church? Nor do I mean that she is free from error and hypocrisy, but, all considered, she seems to me at present the most respectable. Is this a sufficient reason why I should yield to the pressure of some good friends and abdicate my independence by declaring myself Anglican? I do not feel it so.

July 1, 1855.

Feeling myself carried away by an order of ideas which I cannot reveal to those who have honored me with their friendship, unwilling to adventure myself in any of the ways that open before me, and resolved not to become the man of any sect or party, for there is not one to the doctrines of which I could give my full allegiance, I think seriously of freeing myself without delay from the

protection with which a number of kind friends favor me, with the hope of seeing me embrace their belief and following their way.

August 1st.

My decision is made. I have resolved to break all my ties with the old world and to seek in the new that independence of soul for which I have paid so great a price without being able to fully obtain it.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE NEW WORLD.

**T**O-DAY at noon, August 15, 1855, I embarked at Liverpool for New York, wishing to put the ocean between my past and my future. This serious step was not taken without a painful wrench of the heart. I cannot withdraw my eyes or my thoughts from the shores of the old world to which I am held by so many ties.

Adieu, well beloved parents ! It is partly my affection for you which compels me to go far away. Do not fear, however, that separation can ever alter it.

Adieu, my good friends ! Alas, your number is much decreased within a year. I have nothing against those who have abandoned me ; I shall be only the more faithful to those who remain.

Adieu, France, my beautiful country ! It matters not how far the tempest may carry me from thee, thou shalt always be the land of my first love.

Adieu, Church, still venerated in spite of thy errors. Never can I forget that through thee I

was initiated to the Christian faith and to the charm of piety. Adieu to all that were dear to me and whom I still love. Adieu !

August 18.

Never, not even when I left Rome and the Roman Church, have I felt more alone in the world. Not a friend, not an acquaintance. Behind me, sacrifice ; before me, the unknown ! It is the most complete isolation. During the past two days I have been a prey to the most profound sadness. However, thank God, my ideas are insensibly modified, my melancholy passes away. I do not know whether it is the effect of Sunday, but I find myself in a solemn mood this evening and even happy in my sacrifices. The sun has just set in an immense flood of purple. The moon seems to smile on me across the cordage of the ship. Just now a magnificent rainbow formed in the east like the portals of Europe. I am nearly alone on deck, at least I am in entire solitude. Nothing disturbs my reverie, and this reverie possesses an indescribable charm, like the Infinite, of whom the image is before me, over me and around me. Although not knowing why, I feel my soul in repose and my heart satisfied ! O my soul, bless the Lord ! And all that is within me bless his holy name ! It is He who shall heal all thy wounds !



August 30.

To-day the Lord looked with pity upon my widowed heart, and gave me one of his most precious gifts. He allowed me to find a friend.

From my first conversation with Frederic Christie I felt myself strongly attracted. Superior education, generous aspirations, a gentle melancholy—all this won me, and this evening, in a burst of sympathy, I revealed myself to him without reserve. He was equally frank with me. From that moment we knew one another better, perhaps, than any one else, and our confidences made us both happy.

Thus, then, I am no longer alone in the world. My thirst of loving has found an object upon which it can be satisfied, and an object worthy of love. I thank Thee, my God, for this unhopèd-for mercy! It is perhaps the greatest that could be given me in my present condition.

September 19th.

Last days of our voyage! Although it has been three weeks since the day we met, it has seemed short to my new friend and to me. We passed our days and often part of our nights, now in intimate conversation, and again in mute contemplation, interrupted by reading or recitation of passages from our favorite authors: Shakespeare,

Victor Hugo, etc. But above all did we enjoy the meditations of Lamartine, which suited best the state of our minds. Sometimes when our thoughts took a more religious turn, we limited ourselves to the contemplation of some New Testament verses, or a quotation from the Imitation. We enjoyed commenting upon them together, finding in this an inexpressible delight. Frederic C—— was born a Protestant, and brought up so ; until recently I had been a fervent Romanist, and starting from extremes so opposite, we felt a true satisfaction to meet each other and unite on common ground, the spirit of Christianity. Sincerely loving the true, the good, the beautiful, we endeavored to give free flight to our souls in the field of the Infinite, and this had an ineffable charm for us. The moment when we shall have to separate and pass from the ocean of dreams to the land of realities will come all too soon for our intimacy.

September 20th.

Glorious day ! At early morning we found ourselves in sight of the American coast. At eleven o'clock we entered the magnificent bay of New York. All is new and charming. The country seats and houses built on the shores or banks near the water are pretty and coquettish. The ships of all kinds which pass and repass in every part of

the harbor are remarkably graceful. The steamers which ply between the cities on the river are like moving palaces. The Americans belonging to the custom house, police, etc., are neatly and even elegantly dressed; every one has a well-cared-for and comfortable appearance.

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At last here we are! Hardly installed at the hotel, in a room looking out upon the City Hall, happy in my thoughts after all the agitations, the distractions and emotions of an arrival in a new world, I experience something strange and inexpressible—a delight of independence amounting almost to intoxication. In fact, was it not to conquer this independence that I gave up all the rest?

*Ecce nova facio omnia*: in this country where all is new to me, everything within me must become new also.

A crowd of questions already present themselves to my mind. How can I solve them? At all events, I shall use the criterion of truth which was given me by my illustrious and holy director, Père de Ravignan: "All that tends to elevate the mind and enlarge the heart is true; all that has a contrary effect is false." Then may I know Thee, O Lord, and may I know myself! *Noverim te, noverim me!*

With virtue for a mission, with God for my

hope, is there not here enough to give value to my life? And who shall prevent me from following this double and worthy object?

September 23d.

May this day, the anniversary of my birth, begin for me a new life. To live is not enough. I have a work to do. Liberty and truth—here are my two idols. Liberty for the truth and the truth through liberty, here is the means and here is the end.

Let us leave the past; it is dead!

Let us live for the future; it is only in view of it I can act.

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Knowing that Boston was the capital of mind and the center of culture in the great Republic, I determined to take up my residence there for a time at least, in order to bring myself in touch with American life and thought at its best.

November 3, 1855.

The very day after my arrival a friend, happily met at the Revere House, took me to the home of Mr. Longfellow, the pre-eminent poet of the new world. His reception was most gracious; he received us in the room where Washington held his headquarters, and

where a Frenchman loves to find the name of Lafayette. Mr. Longfellow kindly proposed me a dinner of introduction, so that the first official dinner I took in the United States was at the house of one of America's purest glories, a house venerated as a sanctuary by his countrymen, and in company with several of the most cultivated minds of Boston; for Mr. Longfellow, who does nothing by halves, had invited to this dinner the leading professors of the University of Cambridge. A delicate attention on his part, too, was that the dinner was prepared and served entirely *à la française*. But what followed I valued and enjoyed far more than the dinner. When the twelve other guests had gone home, he asked me to remain alone in order that we might engage in more intimate conversation. I will not soon forget his charming candor and warm-hearted sympathy, which soon won my confidence and made it easy for me to speak to him of my personal experiences. He understood me, approved and encouraged my present determination and declared himself my friend. This day, and, above all, the conversation which closed it, shall ever have a part among my best souvenirs.

November 5th.

Almost by chance I was introduced to-day to

the Bishop of Massachusetts, the Right Rev. Dr. Manton Eastburn. I was not prepared for this introduction, and when it was proposed, I regretted that my costume was not such as to meet a person of such dignity. On seeing his lordship, all awkwardness on my part disappeared. Not one distinctive mark characterized this man, save his fine presence and distinguished and affable manners. The bishop spoke to me as a minister of Christ and showed me much kindness. I had not to fall on my knees before this good man, as one has to do before the so-called *grandeurs* of the Roman hierarchy. A cordial shake of the hand advantageously replaced this Pharisaic ceremony. The bishop is, with the ministers under his jurisdiction, the *primus inter pares*, a sort of elder brother. Surely this manner of being and acting is more apostolic than that of the superb prelates under Roman authority.

November 15th.

The circle of my acquaintances, and I may say of my friends, is enlarging every day. They are, almost without exception, noble types of humanity. Is there a city that can be compared with Boston for the number of superior men it contains in every branch of excellence?

Yesterday I was presented to one especially

worthy, a true gentleman, and a member of the American Congress, the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop. To-day the one who now occupies the pulpit of Dr. Channing, his worthy successor in noble qualities of heart and soul, Rev. Dr. Ezra Gannett, came to invite me to dine at his house with a gathering of distinguished men whom he desired me to know. May I prove worthy of such kindness! I have been in this incomparable city only a fortnight, and already I find myself in pleasant relation with the most estimable of its citizens.

November 22d.

Under the patronage of my new friends, all of them persons of influence, I delivered yesterday evening in a large hall my first discourse in America. The assembly was numerous and select, I was listened to with manifest sympathy, and the success of this, my first effort, was most encouraging. The favor which this introductory discourse obtained with the press of the city, as well as my personal acquaintances, remove all anxiety as to my ability to make for myself an honorable position in the United States.

November 24th.

One thing only has happened thus far to mar the pleasure of my stay here. I was approached

to-day by a clergyman of the Congregationalist Church with a proposition to identify myself with that denomination. This gentleman had been especially kind to me, and I hardly knew how to meet, without offense, what to him no doubt was a worthy act of zeal. I found myself in a particularly painful position ; either give up my independence of soul, which to me is of sovereign value, so that to acquire it I felt it my duty to sacrifice everything, or appear to betray another duty especially dear to my heart, the duty of gratitude. In consideration of my future as well as my past one course only was open to me, and this I resolved to follow though it might cut me off from friends.

November 25th.

To-day I can either boast or reproach myself for having sat in the assembly of those whom the orthodox call infidels. I went to hear Theodore Parker at the Music Hall—Theodore Parker, who is avoided and disavowed even by the Unitarians. Now I must confess that in all he said there was not an idea nor a word that wounded me ; on the contrary, this appeared to be just the atmosphere for my present state of mind. Mr. Parker, in my sense, is a logical and truly brave preacher ; the others, I speak of course of the liberals, seemed



to draw back from the consequences of the principles they have laid down. Here is a Protestant, indeed, in the full sense of the word. After the service I was introduced to Mr. Parker, who already knew something of my history, and welcomed me with marked politeness. He invited me to call upon him for a confidential talk at any time that I should feel inclined to do so. I shall avail myself of this invitation.

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I perceive that in ceasing to be a Catholic the more catholic I have become. The further I go away from Rome the more my horizon extends, the more my principles broaden, the larger grows my heart, and, consequently, the more truly catholic I grow to be in feeling as well as in thought. There is nothing more anti-catholic than the Church which pretends to appropriate to itself that noble and beautiful name.

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Wendell Phillips has been preaching at the Music Hall in place of Theodore Parker, who is ill. I like that. Why has not a learned layman, endowed with a message of truth, as much right as a minister to speak on religion? In some ways he is even more qualified to do so, for a minister can hardly speak disinterestedly. A man who, in order to keep his position and the consideration he

enjoys, is obliged to speak in a particular sense, no matter how sincere he may be, can inspire only a relative confidence. All his studies and meditations have been made in conformity with the views he has committed himself to preach.

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I feel somewhat frightened by all the questions which present themselves to me. Men have so misrepresented religion; they have so exerted themselves in showing as divine their own conceptions, that in all that is given me as coming from God I tremble lest I should find most of it mere human invention. Now as the truth is the only thing I seek, I shall not stop in the middle of the road. May the good God enlighten and direct me! I desire to worship Him alone, according to His express command: "Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve!"

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Think for thyself! Descartes showed himself a sage, indeed, when he expressed this profound principle. And that man only deserves the same title who acts according to this precept. Think for thyself! This is the beginning of wisdom. "The whole land is in desolation because no one reflects." It is true, that it is easier to accept without serious examination a ready made religion. This suits idle minds, and they are many. Never-

theless, it belongs only to children to swallow indiscriminately everything put into their mouths. Having come to maturity, they distinguish for themselves between what agrees and disagrees with them. It should be the same with things of the mind. Must the soul remain purely passive and receive every impression to which it pleases this one and that one to subject it? Active by nature, must it not act? If I have the discerning spirit, is it not that I should employ it to discern? Must I move only when some one moves me?

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Sometimes we hear people who consider themselves without religion, complimenting the faithful in this way: "You who are able to believe must be very happy." I confess I cannot envy such happiness. If those who believe, understand at the same time, well and good. But then one should say: "You are very happy, you who understand." What real happiness can there be in holding as indisputable things in no wise certain! It is the happiness of illusion such as the imagination alone can give, and I claim to have enjoyed it formerly as well as anybody. But now that the edifice of the belief to which I owed it has crumbled down, I do not feel that I should be pitied. I enjoy, on the contrary, the satisfaction of a soul free from prejudice, who loves truth

above all things, and will never be affirmative except when it knows.

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And thus religion, as they understand it, extinguishes the sweetest and most legitimate feelings of the human heart. It is because of their religion that my brothers and sisters have ceased to cherish any regard for one who loves them dearly. It is because of their religion that several of my former friends deny and despise me. Alas! it is because of religion that one curses, slanders, persecutes and crucifies. It is because of religion that one delivers to Satan nine-tenths of the children of men who are at the same time the children of God. And these poor blind consider such feelings as pleasing to Him who has said: "This is my command, that ye love one another."

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"Do you believe in revelation?" I was asked. How can I help believing in it. Every discovery, every human invention (and there are many in these days) is a revelation of its own kind. The Gospel is the greatest of religious revelations, the law of gravitation one of the greatest of scientific revelations.

Dec. 31, 1856.

What a year ends to-day! The great experience

I have made in it is that the more one draws near to nature, the more one walks in the way of truth and virtue. It seems to me, and I thank God for it, that my moral level has been raised. May it be really so! May each year increase my love of the good, the beautiful and the true! I have no longer what sectarians call faith, that faith which is nothing but belief, and is taken by them for absolute certainty, but I have confidence in God, and that is sufficient for me. The wants, the aspirations, which I find in my soul must have some real object; I long for truth, justice, affection, happiness, and I hope to fill my soul with them some day. I aspire to perfection, and I shall endeavor to perfect myself. A day must come when all my faculties will attain their legitimate satisfaction. Where, when and how, I do not know. But everything in me tells me that it will be so, and so I hope.

## CHAPTER XI.

### VARIED EXPERIENCES ; NEW YORK.

THIS first year in New England was most encouraging. My literary conferences met with unexpected success. A complete course was given in the hall of the Y. M. C. A., Boston, and various series at Cambridge, Lynn, Milton, Nahant and Newport. From all these places the most gratifying letters came to me quite unexpectedly from several persons well known in the world of letters. Among them we find such names as those of Mr. Longfellow, Theodore Parker, Dr. Hedge, Edmund Quincy, Wendell Phillips, Lothrop Motley, Bishop Eastburn, Charles Brooks, Henry Tuckerman, Robert C. Winthrop, Rufus Choate, Edward Everett, etc., etc. Notwithstanding, there was nothing permanent as yet in my position.

Two propositions were just then made to me: the one, to fill the professorship of French language and literature in Washington University, at St. Louis; the other, to establish a collegiate school for young ladies at Lexington, Ky.

We started for St. Louis first, but as the aspect

of things there did not appear favorable, we soon left for Lexington, where we were already known to the family of Senator Duncan, and were well furnished with letters to Mr. Breckinridge, the family of Henry Clay and several others. One of the largest and best houses in the city was put at our disposal, and many pupils were already enrolled, when an incident happened which brought all our projects to a sudden end.

One Sunday, in returning from church, we passed without knowing it, through the slave market. It was an open square where many men had gathered and were employed in bartering for a female slave. Coming from Boston, where I had been associated with Wendell Phillips, Lloyd Garrison, and others of the abolitionist party, to which my heart thoroughly belonged, I could not help in some degree showing the pain and indignation I felt. This criticism stirred up bad feelings, which some of the people did not hesitate to express so openly that a friendly ear which caught them lost no time in repeating them to me. Late that night, I was awakened by a soft rapping upon our window which opened upon the back piazza of the hotel, and found there a young mulatto, who was engaged in doing some printing for the school. He brought news of a plot to tar and feather me, and in this high-handed and desperate way to cut

short my dangerous doctrines. I did not propose to retract what I had said, and so there was nothing for me to do but to leave the place at once, which we did at daybreak next day. We turned our steps to Cincinnati where at least we should be on free soil.

Our sojourn in this city was a brief one, but it brought us in touch with many choice minds, chief among them, the Rev. Moncure Conway, minister to the Unitarian congregation, and Mr. Spofford, later librarian of Congress, Editor of the Cincinnati *Commercial*. Of the first of these, Theodore Parker wrote to me: "He is a young man of superior talents, and whose ideas entirely accord with my own;" of the second, Mr. Parker said: "He is the most learned man of the West, a man of heart as well as of mind." Ample opportunity was given me to prove the truth of these expressions of esteem, and to my personal contact with these two noble-spirited men I look back with feelings of true satisfaction.

I read in my journal these reflections:

What a fine and rare sight to find united in one church men free from all prejudice, having put aside every preconception, with no other care than instruction and edification, ready to sacrifice all things for the truth, eager to come, under the eye of God, to a deeper knowledge of the sacredness



of life and the dignity of the human soul. This is the spectacle which the liberal church of Mr. Conway presents to-day. For the first time since I left Rome, I find myself able and willing to preach in a church. What a difference between what I said to-day, and the ideas I expressed then ! I was a man this morning—a free man ! Formerly I was a blind fanatic.

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I hear that the brother of Dr. Newman, who, like him, was one of the glories of Oxford, has just taken a road diametrically opposed to that followed by the Oratorian. He belongs to-day to the school of Parker. Thus both these brothers have been logical ; the one has followed the logic of fanaticism, the other that of free thought. For the first, it is authority which makes truth ; for the second, it is truth which makes authority. Mr. Newman's book, "The Phases of My Creed," appeals to me deeply. It is nearly my own history ; the same doubts, the same trials, the same reflections, the same transactions, the same conclusions. There is in this volume reason, logic and an admirable sincerity. It teaches me to know and to resist better the sectarian spirit. Oh ! blest a thousand times be the day when I arose above all considerations of sect !

I have been admitted as an honorary member

of the Literary Club of Cincinnati. At the first meeting which I attended, the discussion bore upon a religious question. What I especially admire in the two most distinguished members of this club, Messrs. Spofford and Conway, is the straightforward and simple manner in which they answer "I do not know," on precisely the same subjects which the ignorant treat with all the presumption and assurance that springs from narrow and limited intelligence. I can have confidence only in a man who can doubt. It is only fanaticism or folly which never questions.

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The lover of truth never admits anything but what is demonstrated to him. He is very exacting in regard to the premises, but the moment he has accepted them, he goes from consequence to consequence to the last limits. Nothing can stop him. He is by no means preoccupied with the final result to which he may be brought. He wants truth, even should it be contrary to all the opinions in favor; should it be painful for him and for others; should it be a wall of separation between him and his friends; between his former self and himself of to-day;

Justum et tenacem,  
Impavidum ferient ruinae.

He goes on, goes on always, with this firm belief,

that if severe logic leads him where at first he should not have thought of going, he is, nevertheless, in the right path, and that, if in the right path, he must reach the true goal.

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There is no sect, political, social or religious, which has not its fanatics. There are pagan fanatics and Christian fanatics, fanatics of the Pope and fanatics of the Bible, fanatics of absolutism and fanatics of democracy, fanatics of feudalism and fanatics of socialism ; but where are the fanatics of truth—those who love truth more than any party, any system, any creed ; who would be willing to give up or suffer anything for truth's sake ? Their number is so limited that they can not form a body. Well ! should I be the only one of such a body, the party of truth, I would be its fanatical partisan.

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Some say to me : " Submit thy reason." Any one who wishes to deceive me would say the same. He who at first requires from me such a concession renders himself suspected by the very fact.

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Before everything else, we are free. Freedom is our most valuable and most glorious privilege : let us know how to preserve and defend it. *I am free* : this must be the starting-point in every religious

investigation or discussion. The minister or the fanatic of any sect comes to me declaring authoritatively : " My religion is the only true one ; you must submit yourself to it." I answer him : " I am free ; I am so by divine right ; and as such I refuse your demand, unless you produce here before me your titles, but evident, incontestable titles, such as will exclude every possible doubt, and will not permit the least hesitation. Till then, woe and shame to me if unfaithfully and like a coward I should forfeit what I hold as most precious and inalienable in the world—my liberty ! Oh ! if every one—and it is the paramount duty of each—should act so ! What a desert then in the so-called Orthodox or infallible churches !

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What is the rarest thing among men ? A man.

What is the rarest thing among reasonable beings ? Reason.

What is the rarest thing among free-born souls ? Freedom.

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We left Cincinnati in some anxiety about the future. New York seemed to me to offer not only the most favorable opportunities for my literary efforts, but also a large field for study of the many and various phases of religious belief and activity. I had but one or two friends in that city, yet I felt

that they were men whom I could trust. This confidence was not misplaced. From the moment of our arrival, Henry Tuckerman, Dr. Henry Bellows and others took a most lively interest in our well-being. It was shortly arranged that I should give a course of sermons on Unity in the church of Dr. Bellows, on the corner of Twentieth street and Fourth avenue. These sermons met with a most encouraging reception and drew many people of liberal mind among the various Protestant denominations. The impressions of my auditors were not always the same. What pleased some in the free and radical discussion of the subject before me, was percisely what displeased others. For the orthodox were present as well as the liberal thinkers. Notwithstanding, even among the more positive denominations there were those who expressed their sympathy and agreement with my views. An Episcopalian lady, with all the exterior appearance of wealth and cultivation, came forward after the first service to congratulate me upon having undertaken such a useful mission. "There are," she said, "among our people a number of souls more or less independent who cannot accept heartily every dogmatic assertion of those who calls themselves orthodox. Reasons of various kinds do not permit them to say all they think in their ordinary surroundings, and they

would not go and hear a declared Unitarian, such as Dr. Bellows. But they believe that they may attend a French service, where the preaching is liberal, without offending any one."

As the church of Dr. Bellows could not always be at our disposal, my friends made arrangements that I should use a hall in the Cooper Institute, and there continue the free and open discussion of religious doctrine and truth. I preached there during the eight months between October, 1858, and May, 1859. The success of this enterprise was somewhat remarkable. The hall, though an ample one, was, on several occasions, found to be too small for the audience. A large number of my hearers were men belonging to the press of the city and the learned professions. Along with this work a little club was started under the name of "The Council of Ten," with the object of studying and investigating the various religious systems of the world. This club continued for several years, and while it may not have accomplished any great practical results, it served at least to deepen our interest and heighten our enthusiasm in the pursuit of religious truth.

My Sunday discourses might have continued indefinitely had I not received in April of 1859 a letter from Mr. Longfellow, asking me to take charge of the department of French language and

literature at Harvard University. As this invitation came to me entirely unsought, and was accompanied by an expression of deep affection on the part of Mr. Longfellow, I asked myself with no little concern whether I should not accept it. The thought of putting down a task so lately begun and so full of promise was distasteful to me, and I only allowed myself to accept Mr. Longfellow's invitation with the conviction that at some future day I would resume such a work. Looking back from my present position, I think I can see the hand of Providence guiding me to the decision I then made. In spite of the unexpected popularity of this series of services, I do not believe I was entirely fitted either in mind or in my appreciation of the truths of Christianity to bring such an undertaking to good effect. My views were still reactionary, and had not fully recovered from the unsettled condition consequent upon my rejection of the Roman claims.

Many were the expressions of regret on the part of those who made up our congregation that the services were to be discontinued. A generous effort was made, started by Mr. Leavitt Hunt, to establish the enterprise upon a permanent basis; notwithstanding, as this came after my letter of acceptance had been sent to Mr. Longfellow, it could not accomplish its purpose.

Our last meeting was a most impressive one. I made my farewell in these words :

“To-day must cease, at least for some time, this work which has become very dear to me, and which, in spite of difficulties and contradictions that confronted it at the beginning, has already brought me true pleasure and valued encouragement. Three kinds of persons have frequented our services. The first, I regret to say, are the Scribes and Pharisees of Christianity. They are not many, but they have been in attendance with decidedly hostile intentions. I dare not hope that anything I have said has been useful to this class of hearers. They belong to those who have eyes and see not, and ears and hear not. Jesus Himself does not seem to have made any notable conversion among the Pharisees. St. Paul, it is true, belonged to this caste, but in order that he should see the light by a kind of miracle scales fell from his eyes. May this marvel be renewed in favor of one at least of the blind of whom I have just spoken.

“Other persons in great numbers came, attracted chiefly by curiosity. I do not blame them ; on the contrary, curiosity, accompanied by sincerity, naturally leads to the truth as investigation leads to knowledge. Besides, it is sweet to me to state that this curiosity, with a good number, soon gave



place to a true interest. I have had encouraging evidences of this.

“ Finally, many amongst you have from the first favored these meetings with your sympathy. I thank you for it, and I trust that to you, as well as to me, each Sunday has marked a step forward in the development of religious thought and life. It is to understand one another when both have the single high object—the pursuit of the true, the good and the right.

“ I owe here my particular thanks to the noble friends who, learning that I have been called elsewhere, conceived so generous a plan to continue this work and to keep me here. I shall carry away with me a sweet remembrance of their interest and affection. Besides, we separate, I like to think, only for a time.

“ Several amongst you, in thanking me, have said I made them think. I am glad of it, for this is the result I desire above all other. I do not ask you to adopt my way of viewing things, but at least think and judge for yourselves. All our dignity, says Pascal, is in thought. Think then, think the more seriously, because the matters presented to you for reflection are so grave and lofty. Error, falsehood, and crime come often because no one thinks. Thought leads to the truth and the truth leads to virtue.”

If I had any doubt of the serious interest which this enterprise had awakened, it would have been dissipated at this, our last meeting. The number of those in attendance more than filled the hall and many were visibly moved. The adieux which were made me, and the regrets which my friends expressed were most gratifying. For a long time I have not been so deeply and happily impressed as at this our last service in New York.

## CHAPTER XII.

### BOSTON.

HARDLY had I begun my course of instruction at the university, when a proposition was made me by Mr. Agassiz, whose school in Cambridge will long be remembered as the leading institution for the education of young women in this country. The instructors were most of them professors at the university. Mr. Agassiz was preparing at this time to make a journey of exploration in South America, which would likely consume many months, and he came to me with the request that I should take his lecture hours in the school for a course in French literature. I at once accepted this offer, and found myself happy in a work so congenial to my training and inclinations.

But another proposition followed this, which pleased me even more. The Rev. Dr. Manning, pastor of the Old South Church, a Congregationalist of the liberal school, having heard of the work I had been doing in New York, called on me and asked me to undertake a similar work in Boston. He

placed the Old South Chapel at my disposal, and the next Saturday the first of my services was announced in the papers, and on Sunday I found the chapel full. To take up religious work again was most agreeable to me, especially as I had not ceased to regret my enforced separation from our little band of enthusiasts in New York.

My life at Cambridge renewed many of the associations which I had found so helpful and gratifying during my first visit to Boston. Among others, it was my privilege to come in contact with that rare mind, Ralph Waldo Emerson. I recall particularly a day I spent at his home in Concord. In the afternoon, he proposed a walk in a grove a short distance from his home. In the middle of this bit of woods was a somewhat spacious pond which Mr. Emerson looked upon as a lake. We sat down on a little hill which commanded a view of it. After some moments of mute contemplation, Emerson said to me: "It is now fifteen years that every day when the weather and my occupations permit I come and sit for a few moments in this place, and each time I find in this little lake some new beauty." Thus it is that for a man who lives the life of the spirit, even a narrow lake may become an inexhaustible source of inspiration and enjoyment, whilst for the common-place man even the vast ocean itself may seem to be nothing but a

body of salt water, sometimes calm, and sometimes agitated.

I made the acquaintance at this time of two other men of eminence, James Freeman Clarke, and Thos. Starr King. The latter was to prove not only an agreeable companion but a warm-hearted friend. In such an atmosphere, among men of many views, I found ample food for reflection and abundant opportunity for study in the lines of both religious and political thought.

Here are some of my reflections :

If the present is not an age of religious convictions, it is certainly one of religious sincerity. Without failing in any degree in the respect due to things sacred, or only so called, it dares to look upon them steadily, and even holds that to be its duty. Man is no longer afraid of God ; on the contrary he seeks Him. We consider, then, not as a sacrilege, but as an act of conscientious piety, the work of criticism, now undertaken by so many sincerely religious men, on the historical bases of Christianity ; and we believe that there will result from such a work, in place of the idolatrous worship paid by so many Christians to certain men and certain things, a more judicious appreciation, and a more reasonable estimation of those men and

those things. Superstition will undoubtedly lose by this. Religion cannot but gain.

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What is religion? A science? No. A law? No. It is a want; the noblest of our nature. This want man satisfies with elements more or less coarse, more or less pure, according to the degree of his development and advancement; but the moment he feels it, he becomes a religious man, even should he be counted amongst pagans and idolators. Whosoever does not feel that want has but an incomplete human nature, and resembles one deprived of reason; the most precious of his faculties has been denied him; and whosoever experiencing that want does not endeavor to satisfy it, deserves, and he alone deserves, the name of "infidel."

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Religion as a principle is the relation, the link, between the soul and God; and practical religion is that relation, that link, growing closer and closer. God, the supreme perfection, is the end; the soul freely possessing all its faculties is forever drawn towards that supreme splendor. The race it has to run embraces the immense distance which separates it from God; its religion grows just in proportion as it advances nearer to the divine end. Every truth discovered, every good deed

performed, each throb of pure love felt, every pious emotion experienced, is one more step in the royal road that leads to heaven!

“Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” All religion, theoretical and practical, is comprised in these words.

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Is religion, therefore, nothing but the accomplishment of duty, the love and pursuit of truth, justice and virtue? No! All that belongs to religion; but religion is yet more than that; and the only proof I should require of it is found in the religious faculty with which we are gifted—a distinct faculty, neither intelligence, nor conscience, nor imagination, nor will, and which consequently, like each one of these, has its own peculiar object. To bring these same faculties in close relation with their ultimate object, God—to make them divine, if I may say so—that is the work of religion! What does our intelligence seek for? Truth! Now, the religious faculty leads the intellect to God as the supreme source from which all truth flows, and by whom alone this thirst for truth can be fully assuaged; and so with all our faculties.

Hence it follows that a man may love beyond all things truth, virtue and right, without being really a religious man. Little is wanting to make

him such; but that little is essential. There is before us the altar; everything is prepared for the offering; the odorous wood, the rich gums are there; what is wanting that the incense may rise up? A spark!

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The time is coming, and for many it has come already, when a man to be sincerely religious must be a rationalist. Let no one conclude from this, that in order to be religious it is enough to be a rationalist. Rationalism applies only to those truths in religion which are within the dominion of reason, which belong to the intellect. Now, religion is less a matter of reason than of feeling. Reason confirms the discoveries of the soul in religious matters, but does not make them. These are the objects of faith. Thus it is that the existence of God is essentially an article of faith; for no premises, however large, can embrace the infinite as a conclusion. This is, in fact, the only legitimate article of faith, for all truths proceed logically from that absolute principle.

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Good actions are not enough for a religious life. Piety must have its share. There are in religion two elements—an active and a mystic one. On the one hand, the union with God intimately felt, a source of unspeakable peace and delight; on the



other, life ordained, sanctified, fruitful in works of mercy and virtue. He who loves God accomplishes his law. To love God, then, and to accomplish his law, sums up all religion. It requires two things—piety and virtue.

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“O God, Thou art my God.” These words most admirably express the distinction between ritual and doctrinal religion and heartfelt and practical religion. Every one can say, and almost every one says, “O God.” Every one talks of God and may invoke and praise Him, but that man only is religious who in all the sincerity and fervor of his soul exclaims, “My God;” who has made God his own; who has communed with Him. Till then, his religion, if he professes any, amounts to nothing but vain speculation and sterile formalism. But then, it becomes life, the native immaterial life of the soul. O God, be my God!

May 11, 1860.

He is dead. What a loss! The nation will at last appreciate him. Strange circumstance—the very day they learn the sad news is the one on which the Unitarians hold their annual convention, in the same hall where each Sunday the crowd tries to find sufficient seats to hear him. It could not be said that all the Unitarians who attended

this fête were in full sympathy with Theodore Parker, notwithstanding, all prejudice this evening seemed to have vanished as if by enchantment. When the fatal news became known, each speaker in turn referred affectionately and reverently to the prophet who had been taken from them, and each time the public received his name with the most heartfelt testimony of sympathy and regard. Indeed, all the interest of the meeting turned to a manifestation in favor of the Reformer.

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Already he lives again. Even the *Courrier des Etats Unis*, which had never before mentioned his name, proclaims him as the first intelligence of this great country. How many there are who have never read one of his works, and yet who will now devour them, in surprise that such substantial food has been so near them, at their very doors. He will thus be more useful in his death than in his life, and this is what happens with every prophet. Why are we so astonished that their death should be so calm, so full of faith and hope?

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Precious remembrance ! I learn that this incomparable man, a fortnight before his death, had sent from Florence an order to his publisher in Boston to furnish me with all his writings. Already several of his works, containing gracious words, written by

his own hand, were in my possession, but this new and last testimony of his affectionate remembrance touches me more deeply than all the others.

The death of the just is precious in the sight of the Lord. To-day we held the memorial service to Theodore Parker. What an immense throng gathered at the Music Hall. The quality of the audience was not less remarkable than their number. There were only men present—I mean free and intelligent beings. The soul of this great man seemed to soar over the vast crowd and to inspire each one with a sense of the sacredness of life and the dignity of manhood.

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Give honor to whom honor is due. The most worthy, best instructed, most distinguished men in every way, whom I have known in the Roman Church are the Jesuits, and I particularly appreciate the religious and spiritual experience which I acquired in their house of probation at Avignon. Though one must repudiate the system, one cannot but admire the men. I can say as much of the Unitarians. They are for me the most intelligent of Protestant ministers, and in almost every instance superior men. Their liberalism is sincere; they love and preach virtue for its own sake; their discourses are less sermons than lofty moral essays

in which the conscience as well as the mind finds much to stimulate and strengthen it. Of all those who honored me with their friendship, there was not one for whom I did not entertain a high and sincere regard. But I must mention one especially, the best man, perhaps, whom I have had the privilege of knowing, the Rev. Dr. Gannett, contemporary and successor to Dr. Channing. I remember, that on one occasion he spoke in words of the most sincere admiration of M. de Cheverus, the first Roman Bishop of Boston. He told me this story.

Abandoned in a miserable cabin outside of Boston was an infirm negro. The bishop found him out and without informing anyone, every evening, after his day's duties, quietly made his way to the cabin and spent his time with this afflicted creature, washing and dressing his sores, making his bed, and providing for his various wants. His servant remarked that each evening the bishop's coat was covered with dust and feathers, and wondering where his master spent his time, followed him afar off on one of his evening excursions. Seeing him enter the cabin, he followed, and looking through the loose timbers which made the wall, saw this man of God engaged in his work of mercy. Dr. Gannett told me this story with a kind of admiration for such

devotion on the part of a prelate. Little did he suppose that I, myself, would surprise him in the exercise of a no less humble and Christlike charity. I had been told that a certain German teacher was lying ill in a cold and comfortless attic in a miserable quarter of the city and had no one to take care of him. At my first free moment I sought the lodging of this poor man, but Dr. Gannett was there before me. I found him at the door with a broom in his hand, with which he had been sweeping the room of the invalid. I entered and found the sick man sitting up in front of a newly lighted fire, carefully rolled up in a blanket, eating grapes which had been brought him by the good Samaritan. The mattress had been removed from the bed, the sheets had been put out to air, the meager furnishings of the room had been put in order, and all this by the hand of my excellent friend, who appeared quite confused to be caught in the act.

His embarrassment was not less when, on another occasion, I discovered him in one of the back streets of Boston carrying a bowl of steaming broth into a miserable-looking abode, where, no doubt, dwelt another of his charges.

My life and work at Harvard University continued until the outbreak of the Rebellion. Naturally

the college life was affected by this serious trouble, and many departments of the university were virtually shut down. Both among the professors and the students the most ardent patriotism was manifested, and when the call came for volunteers, a large proportion of our number were not slow to respond. I remember a most affecting scene in this connection, which expressed the deep loyalty of both North and South to what they conceived to be the right. When it became evident that the country was upon the verge of a supreme crisis, and that war was inevitable, a general meeting of the students was held before separating to go to their several States. Some of our men were Southerners, and it became evident that at the call of duty fellow-student would be obliged to face fellow-student in the impending struggle. This thought cast a very deep solemnity over our meeting, and nothing could have been more touching than to see these men, who were presently to fight against each other, embrace one another with the utmost affection on the eve of their separation.

The attitude of foreign countries toward the North will be remembered as doubtful. England was decidedly antagonistic, while France seemed to be uncertain. Her press was divided and by no means positive in its attitude toward the cause of

the Union. It seemed to me that I could be of service to my adopted country by visiting Paris and *communicating* with those in control of the journals of the day, some of whom I knew, with the object of winning their support for the Government. I called upon the Rev. Dr. Bellows, President of the Sanitary Commission, and suggested the advisability of such a step as I had in mind. He accepted my project most heartily, and after a conference with the Secretary of State, Mr. Seward, commissioned me to carry out this object. It was arranged that I should start for Paris without delay, see in particular each of the prominent journalists, preachers and professors who exercised any marked influence on public opinion, and work in the best way to bring them over to the *cause of the Union*.

After seven years of absence, I found myself in Paris once more. My emotions cannot be described, nor is it my desire here to dwell upon the many recollections which came to me as I viewed again places so familiar and formerly so closely identified with my life. As soon as possible I sought interviews with the leading men of the Liberal party, Jules Simon, Eugene Pelletan, Prévot-Paradol of *Le Journal des Debats*, Louis Jourdan of *Le Siecle*, Elisee Reclus of the *Revue des*

*Deux Mondes*, Frédéric Morin, Edouard Fauvety, Vacherot and others; all men of the highest standing in the world of letters. Those who had at first some doubt on the subject soon became convinced that the war was not, on the part of the North, a war for the sovereignty, but a war for deliverance; that whatever might be the outward pretensions of parties and the particular views of many, slavery was the real cause of the struggle and its abolition must be the ultimate result. And from that moment, with a unity and perseverance quite remarkable, each and all of these worthy men became earnest defenders of the Union, whether in public journal or in private writing.

I was, above all, anxious to meet and talk with M. Edouard Laboulaye, for I knew him to be more than all others interested in the conflict and in sympathy with this country. As he was not then in Paris, I wrote to him at his country seat. I received in answer a letter asking me to come to Bourg-la-reine and spend a day with him. Of course I took advantage of this invitation and passed seven of the most agreeable hours of my life in an uninterrupted conversation with M. Laboulaye. The chief and about the only subject of our talk was the American Republic, her trials, her hopes, her institutions. Great



indeed was my surprise to find a Frenchman who had never crossed the Atlantic better acquainted with affairs of this country than many Americans, more earnest about the maintenance of the Union than many of our celebrated politicians, and appreciating better our privileges and dangers than many of our leaders. Of that conversation I shall only relate the rather strange circumstance which was the beginning of his acquaintance with the great men and things of this country.

One day as M. Laboulaye was looking for some curiosity or lost treasure, on the shelves of a secondhand book seller of the Quai Voltaire, he by chance opened a stray volume of sermons by William Ellery Channing. Sermons by an American preacher were things new to him. The sum of five cents secured the novelty, and while pursuing his course towards the Champs Elysées he began to read it. The more he read, the more his wonder and interest increased, so much so, that he sat down under a tree and could not stop until he had finished the volume. Happy in this unlooked for discovery, he started to return to his house, when he encountered his friend, Armand Bertin, the then celebrated editor of *Les Débats*. "Congratulate me," said M. Laboulaye, "I have just put my hand on a great man." "Well,"

replied the editor, "one who meets with such a good fortune is to be congratulated. And who is your great man?" "Channing!" "Canning?" exclaimed M. Bertin. "A fine discovery indeed! Everyone knows *Canning*." "I don't mean Channing, the Englishman, I mean Channing, an American preacher;" and forthwith M. Laboulaye asked the privilege of writing for the *Debats* his impressions of "Channing." The chief editor agreed. Not only one, but three articles were successively published on the Boston divine. Several others soon followed on other American celebrities, and from this moment this country and her institutions became the favorite topic of M. Laboulaye's studies. All his discoveries he communicated with a true enthusiasm, first, to the numerous hearers of his lectures at the College de France, then to the public through the journals or through his pamphlets which were always read with avidity; and finally on this same darling subject he published two books, destined to remain as monuments of his wonderful knowledge of and devotedness to this country, viz., *L'Histoire Politique des Etats Unis*—a standard work of the literature of this age—and *Paris en Amerique*, the best, perhaps, of modern satires. Thus, while he remained always devoutly attached to France, as a revered and cherished mother, he seemed to have adopted and loved Young America

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as a charming spouse. None has contributed more to make her known and appreciated in the old world, none has suffered more with her in the days of trials, none has rejoiced more in her final triumph, more cheerfully and confidently proposed her example to the lovers and even to the enemies of liberty in his own country.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### SAN FRANCISCO AND CHICAGO.

WHEN I returned to America, the Civil War was at its height. The whole attention of the country, North and South, was concentrated on the momentous struggle. Every other interest fell into abeyance before the grave and critical problem which the nation had been called upon to solve. Naturally at such a time the thoughts of the people, especially in the East, where the storm centered, were not given to matters intellectual and educational. While casting about with some concern for an occupation, an unexpected proposal came to me from my friend, the Rev. T. Starr King, pastor of the First Unitarian Church of San Francisco, and the leading preacher on the Pacific Coast. It was largely due to his influence and eloquence that California was secured to the Union. Mr. King's plan was that I should come to San Francisco and establish a school on the plan of that of Mr. Agassiz, in Cambridge. An invitation to undertake such a work was very congenial to me, and came most opportunely; I was more than glad to accept it.

From the moment of our arrival at San Francisco, Mr. King threw himself, with all his enthusiasm, into the project before us. A fine location was chosen in a most desirable quarter of the city, South Park, and plans were prepared for a large and handsome building. In the meantime the Parish House of the Unitarian Church was placed at our disposal. Here on February 1, 1864, our school was opened by Mr. King himself. The prospects were bright before us, and not the least inviting was the thought of being in close touch with a man of such an excellent spirit. From time to time we enjoyed most interesting conversations together, always on some religious, scientific or political subject.

At one of these meetings, I remember, we remained two hours together in the gallery of the new church, communicating our views and sentiments in an expansion full of charm. When we got up to separate, taking both my hands in his, he said: "It is Wednesday; let it be understood that for the future every Wednesday, from two till four o'clock, we shall meet for mutual edification and conversation, like that which we have just enjoyed." Man proposes, God disposes. The following Wednesday Mr. King was lying upon his death-bed, and the Wednesday after that the soul of this man of God was in Heaven.

March 4, 1864.

What a date! What a day! What a loss! The best of friends, the most ardent of patriots, the most generous of philanthropists, the good, the noble Starr King is taken from us! Would we have believed a few days ago, when he brought us a new testimony of his precious interest; could we have thought it was his last visit, his last going out, the last occasion given us to hear his most sympathetic voice, to look in life upon his serene face. . . . All the city is in consternation. Friends meet and grasp each other's hands with tearful eye, but cannot speak. They say more tears have been shed to-day than during all the city's life. More than a thousand flags float at half-mast on private dwellings, as well as public buildings. O worthy man, how deeply your people love you!

March 5th.

The manifestation of to-day in honor of the noble dead is not less worthy than that of yesterday. The remains are lying in state in the church which has just been completed, and seems now as if built to be his monument. A company of the First regiment of militia and of the Free Masons act as a guard of honor. From noon until ten o'clock at night a long file of people continue to

pass by and to gaze for the last time on the inanimate features of him who, but a few days before, electrified the multitude.

The following Sunday, not only the congregation but many strangers assembled in the church at the usual hour. The pastor's gown was laid upon his pulpit. Not a word was said. Not a note was sung; only from time to time the organ was played softly, while the people sat in mute contemplation giving their thoughts and their hearts to that noble life which had so suddenly been taken from them. The first regular service was held a week later, in memory of this holy man. The high privilege was mine on this occasion to voice the feelings of the people and to express their last tribute to the dead. It will suffice to give here simply the peroration:

"And now, my brethren, what shall I say in conclusion? What can we do to prove our value of the divine work performed by this great man; to declare to God and our fellowmen how reverently we cherish his memory, how sincerely we wish to abide by his teaching. You, indeed, have been a chosen people before whom such an exemplar was set, for whose spiritual benefit that holy life was poured out always freely, always in love. Allow me to say to you at this hour that the

greater your privileges, the greater your obligations. In this spirit and with this conviction let me invite you to accomplish such an act as would have transported his noble heart. Let me ask you here before this vacant pulpit and on the brink of this sanctified grave, and under the influence of his ever living, ever loving spirit, let me ask you to declare from the very depths of your heart: "Yes, O worthy and faithful Pastor of our souls, as a testimony of our undying love and veneration, we here solemnly pledge ourselves to execute your last sacred will, we here solemnly devote ourselves, according to your example and teaching, to the worship of the Father, in spirit and in truth, to the service of humanity, to the salvation of our country, as you have loved and served them even unto death."

For several weeks after the death of Starr King, I remained stunned, as it were, by this unforeseen and painful blow. My best friend was gone; there was no one to take his place. It was he who had fathered our hopeful enterprise in the department of education, and now it became apparent that without his support such a work could not be carried on. Single-handed I did not feel competent to further an undertaking on such an elaborate scale, nor was I able to bear the financial



responsibility of so large an institution. Our school which had been so lately begun was continued, but upon more simple and modest lines.

In the comparative isolation which ensued after the death of my friend, with no intimate and sympathetic soul to commune with on the subjects which lay nearest my heart, I found myself confined to my own reflections and had ample opportunity to think over the many and varied experiences through which I had passed since leaving the Church of Rome. What came home to me in this review of the past was the very little that I had been able to accomplish in the way of practical good. I had been too much given up to my own ideas ; too much interested in religion from merely an intellectual point of view. Nor was this altogether unnatural. While a member of the Roman Communion my intellectual desires had been suppressed. In that atmosphere one finds little food for thought upon the great problems of life ; rather the mind is hemmed about and almost smothered by the ponderous dogmatism of this infallible Church. After my release from such a state of intellectual bondage, it was not strange that the mind should have taken exquisite delight in its newly found freedom and have intensified that phase of religion which had formerly been denied

it. In this connection I find among my notes the following reflections :

In my religious development I have just passed through a phase which all those who seek the truth must face, namely, that in which one says : " It is not to believe, that I wish ; I want to see and to know." I now understand better the necessity of faith ; I understand that religion must commence with an act of faith. No demonstration can prove God ; it is by faith that the soul apprehends Him ; faith which is afterwards confirmed by observation and reason. Faith is thus the base of religion, as it is the principle of all great things. " He who believes shall be saved." " Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." I am not astonished that the Divine Master has so much insisted upon faith. All his precepts may be resumed in two words : Believe and Love. Besides, faith in God and faith in immortality are correlative ; the second is the consequence of the first.

While my mind was occupied with these and similar reflections, an incident happened which served to deepen my convictions on this point. I was walking one afternoon with a neighbor, a German savant, highly respected, but without religious faith, and I expressed to him some little

surprise that this should be so, when he frankly made the following reply: "Here," he said, "is something which will likely astonish you even more: I not only do not see any divine authority for religion, but also fail to recognize any in morality. If I am kind and faithful to my wife and children, it is simply because I find it natural to me to be so, and not because I feel it any duty to act in such a way. If I treat my fellowmen fairly, it is because I am pleased to do so, and not because I recognize any obligation to adopt such an attitude toward them." I was quite taken aback by the candor of the man; nevertheless, on thinking it over, it seemed to me that he was perfectly logical. Without God, there is no such thing as duty; without religion, the very foundation of morality is obliterated. Righteousness becomes simply a matter of expediency; truth and justice have no other warrant than that society has found them useful in the propagation of its life and for the preservation of its order. The whole principle of morals is reduced to a utilitarian basis, and the soul's quest of virtue is no longer a thirst after God, but becomes simply a desire for the easiest and safest mode of life.

As these convictions deepened, it seemed to me I could no longer hesitate in devoting myself exclusively to work which was essentially religious

in character. I had been a wanderer, restlessly taking up and putting down this occupation and that, seeking chiefly my personal culture, finding sweet pleasure in connection with men of rare mind and large spirit, eagerly pursuing the truth and giving my thoughts free play along every avenue of speculation. But now it seemed to me that I had a work to do and a mission to fulfill to my fellowmen, my life should be made productive of good things, should be devoted to a definite object in the field of Christian endeavor.

What distressed me above all else in the experience through which I had recently passed, were the divisions among men, many of them men of ardent piety and lofty moral character. This spectacle of a divided Christendom, this sad misuse of the Gospel as a disintegrating rather than a uniting force, struck me as so violently out of accord with the fundamental principle of Christ's teaching, that I could not but feel pained by it. It seemed as if the sacred robe of Christ were rent in pieces. Such dissensions and differences among worthy men were not only the reproach but the weakness and inevitable loss of the Christian Church. Union alone could supply the strength needed to win an assured and complete victory. Even Jesus foresaw this when He prayed "that they may be

one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us."

This supreme wish of the Master gradually filled my thoughts until I became convinced that my work in the future should be wholly given to the advancement of religion and especially toward the promotion of Christian union. With this determination in mind, I looked about me for a place to begin. The city of Chicago seemed to offer the most favorable field, both an account of its central position and its cosmopolitan population. Accordingly, I decided to make my residence there and there inaugurate my little work.

On January 23d, 1869, we held our first service in the principal Presbyterian church of Chicago, which had been kindly placed at our disposal by the pastor, Rev. Dr. Patterson. The attendance surpassed my expectations, and it was a pleasure to see not only the laymen but pastors from several churches in the congregation. I find noted in my diary this remark: "Our congregation could not be more mixed. Every Christian denomination of any importance is represented. Their representatives seem to desire to forget the differences which separate them from one another, in order to meet on common ground, that of a pure Gospel. Here there are no more sects. All are Christians. In place of the letter which divides and kills, is the

spirit which unites and gives life. My desire is so far accomplished."

After several Sundays, it became expedient to remove our place of meeting to the Swedenborgian Temple, a handsome structure erected largely through the liberality of a much reputed banker, Mr. Scammon, who had from the start taken a lively interest in our work. Before transplanting the enterprise to this more favorable ground, it was thought desirable to give it a definite and characteristic organization. This we did, by choosing a Board of Trustees composed of representatives of each of the principal denominations, the Episcopal, Presbyterian, Swedenborgian, Methodist, Unitarian, Baptist, Universalist, and even a Roman Catholic. At least this was a sign of the predominant feeling among Christians of every sort, of a desire for unity.

April 24th.

To-day we held our first service at the Temple so well adapted to our work. The assembly was all that we could wish, both as regards quality and quantity. Feeling that it was desirable to say a word about the object and character of this undertaking, I defined our position somewhat as follows :

"Our society is at length regularly organized. Its foundation is, as you know, truly Christian.

Jesus did not dogmatize, but He declared that the mark by which his disciples should be known would be their love, one for another. This is evangelical doctrine. After the Master's example, we shall not dogmatize, and in matters of doctrine we shall throw each upon his own responsibility. We shall acknowledge not only the right but the duty of free examination. Beliefs blindly accepted and held are not what we desire to cultivate. What we want are deep convictions."

My work of evangelization prospered beyond our expectation. Notwithstanding, as time wore on and opportunity was given me to study the question of Christian unity from every point of view, I began to entertain some doubts as to the wisdom and true utility of the enterprise. As an indication of the need for unity among Christians, it was certainly a positive sign; but was it an efficacious means of accomplishing this purpose? Was it not rather, in essence, an independent enterprise based upon my own private appreciation of the teachings of Jesus? As such it might promote a more liberal charity of opinion among those who might unite with us. In reality, it was simply one or more added to the numberless independent bodies which the spirit of individualism had already given rise to, only in this instance the purpose of our little party was to

emphasize certain fundamental truths on which men might agree. If the idea were carried out to its logical conclusion, there might be as many different associations as there were different conceptions of Christianity and still the Church would be divided. I came to realize more and more that no permanent union of Christians could have its origin in an organization which an individual in any age might undertake to start, or in other words, no man can found a Church, for the Church is already founded upon the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone. So that the question is really not one of union, but of reunion, and the matter of vital moment is, whether there exists in divided Christendom a nucleus about which the various independent bodies could come together and on the lines of which they might unite.

It was thus that the question of the Church first presented itself, though it did not appear to me in all its significance until some months later.

I devoted the discourses of my second winter in Chicago to the various characteristic marks of the Christian. Starting from the principle that to be a Christian was to have the spirit of Jesus Christ, I spoke successively of the spirit of faith, of self-sacrifice, of prayer, of liberty, of mercy, of the love of God, of brotherly love, etc., when, almost



suddenly, I asked myself the question : Am I in the right on this important matter ? Assuredly, I said, the essential condition of true Christianity is to be animated with the spirit of the Master. "Who has not the spirit of Christ is none of his." But is this the only condition required ? If, for example, the divine Master instituted a distinct and visible body of his disciples, with the mission to perpetuate his life on the earth, is it not manifest, then, that those only would have a full title to the name of Christian who, living inwardly the life of Christ, were outwardly identified as active members of that body ?

Meditating upon this question, I devoted myself once more to the study of the origins and early history of Christianity. It was evident that Jesus from the beginning of his ministry had in contemplation a visible and distinct society which should carry on his work and continue to perpetuate Him after his departure. The selection of the twelve and their endowment with special gifts and powers, the institutions of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, clearly indicate a definite organization as an essential part of his intention. The outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost and the subsequent development of the Church, together with the expansion of the ministry, betokened the growth of a spiritual organism destined to include, nourish and

sustain the faithful of every time and every age. This, it seemed to me, was the evident design of the Saviour as expressed by those whom He commissioned to carry on and extend his life-work.

One thing was distinctly apparent. The Christian Church existed before the Christian Scriptures. Far from the Church being born of the Scriptures, the Scriptures, at least in part, were brought into being by the specific needs of the early Church. Aside from their inspirational value, they serve to correct tendencies unfriendly to the pure truth of the Gospel and to oppose errors which had already crept or might in the future creep in from the contact of Christianity with pagan beliefs and superstitions. Manifestly, the Apostolic Church was scriptural in character, but this ought not to imply that these sacred writings were the source of its life. In view of the trend of biblical criticism, this point appeared of some importance, for even though the documentary evidence of Christianity might be disputed in part, the living witness would still remain.

There were two signs, it seemed to me, by which one might identify a Church qualified to act as a nucleus for the reunion of Christendom, namely, apostolicity and catholicity. The simplicity and fullness of the apostolic teaching and practice, the maintenance of apostolic doctrine in just and rational proportion, without emphasizing one truth

to the detriment of others, the presentation of the person and work of Christ in positive form, seemed to me essential to any body claiming the title of apostolic. As regards catholicity, the fundamental principles I took to be historic continuity, inclusiveness, and adaptibility. In the first aspect, that of catholicity of time, the unity of the Church in the past, present, and future is established. In the second aspect, that of catholicity of spirit, liberty of interpretation is allowed for, and thus progressiveness is made possible. In the third aspect, that of catholicity of method, differences of language, custom and condition are recognized and a wide diversity of instrumentalities provided for.

While following out this line of study and thought, an incident happened which gave my ideas a more definite form. One of the sons of the Bishop of Illinois frequently attended our services. The views I expressed interested and pleased him. He spoke of them to his father, the learned Dr. Whitehouse, who immediately expressed a desire to see and talk with me. Our first interview was of two hours, and was marked throughout by the utmost candor on the part of each of us.

I found the bishop more liberal than I had been led to expect. What I said to him relative to the Church and the urgent need of endeavoring to promote a visible and organic union of all

Christians and also the reasons why the Episcopal Church appeared to me suited as a base and model for such reorganization seemed to please him very much. "Truly," the bishop said to me as I left him, "I cannot see what prevents you from taking steps toward becoming one of us, for I know few of our clergy who hold such broad and healthy views upon this important question." Four or five other interviews with the bishop, in which I explained to him my position and way of viewing things, dissipated any doubts which I had as to the propriety of identifying myself with the ministry of the Episcopal Church.

Some days later, at a meeting of the Board of Missions, held in New York, and in the presence of several of the bishops, Dr. Whitehouse spoke of his experience with me, and the Bishop of Pennsylvania, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Stevens, expressed the desire of having me in his diocese. Accordingly, on the 23d of June, 1871, in the Church of the Saviour, West Philadelphia, on the presentation of Bishop Whitehouse, and in the presence of the presiding bishop, Dr. Lee, of Delaware, and a number of the clergy, I was received as a presbyter of the Episcopal Church by Bishop Stevens. On the following Sunday I preached my first sermon in the Cathedral of Chicago, the

city where my religious aspirations had at last found their best and fullest expression.

Having reached what promises to be the end of my religious journey, it seems fit to look back and recall its principal stations.

The most important steps of my spiritual career are five in number, viz. :

1. Giving up the world for the church.
2. Making my novitiate at the Jesuits.
3. Renouncing Romanism.
4. Seeking after truth.
5. Joining the Episcopal Church.

I gave up the life of the world under this impression : "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

I made my novitiate at the Jesuits to obey this behest : "Covet earnestly the best gifts."

I threw off the yoke of Rome to answer this appeal : "He has called us to the freedom of the children of God."

I sought for truth under the divine promise : "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

I became an Episcopalian in order that my religious work should be "built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets."

I want to save my soul—seminary.

Salvation is not enough, I must aim at perfection—novitiate.

A man to become perfect must first be free—emancipation.

He must love truth above all things and seek it by every means—earnest inquiry.

He must teach as having authority—Episcopal Church.

And this is what I propose doing in the well-named city of Philadelphia, likely my last religious station before giving up my account. *Hæc requies mea; hic habitabo quoniam elegi eam!* Please God, I shall endeavor to work according to the religious requirements of our time and in the broad spirit of the Episcopal Church.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### RELIGIOUS REQUIREMENTS OF OUR TIME.

WE have reached one of the most solemn epochs of history ; one of those epochs by which the face of the world is renewed. We are witnessing the birth of a new age. Stupendous forces are at work in all the branches of human activity. Everything changes, or is about to change, in the religious as well as in the social order.

The present time is full of analogy with that in which the Saviour appeared. What did He announce ? The fall of the temple—the material sign that the Mosaic institution was to give place to one more universal and more perfect. Judaism, in its relation with the general destinies of humanity, had accomplished its mission, and a doctrine broader and more in harmony with the new wants of mankind was to succeed. A similar change is being enacted to-day in religious systems and social institutions. There is, as it were, a new infusion of the divine spirit in the religious world ; the living God seems intent upon raising on the

ruins of the old a new temple, destined to become the universal shrine and sanctuary of the human family. The spirit of Judaism has been slow to die; the spirit of Christ has not yet fully come; exclusiveness and intolerance must needs pass away before inclusiveness and charity can be truly realized. The relics of paganism, seen even among Christian people, must be obliterated. Idolatry, superstition, egotism have yet to perish.

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Many are the indications of this momentous and most blessed change. In the scientific world, a reverent regard for truth; in the social world, a deep desire for fraternity; in the religious world, a widespread desire for unity. In every department of life all earnest and thoughtful minds find themselves unconsciously tending in the same direction, passing out of the regions of strife and discord to the realms of peace and good will. The spirit of sect no longer enthralls them; divisions are not a part of the divine intention; life is one, for God is one. The separation of religion from science, the separation of class from class, the separation of church from church, which was the product of human infirmity, are giving place to a new faith in Christ as the unifier of all phases of life and thought.



In the religious world a most encouraging sign of the times appears in this: Among all those who concern themselves with the deeper interest of Christianity and seek the best interests of humanity, the same idea is reproducing itself incessantly under many varying forms, namely, less of theology, more of religion; less of rites and practices, more of good works; less of dogmas, more of morals; less of the priest, more of the apostle; less of creeds, more of the decalogue; less of the churches, more of Christ. Religion henceforth will be recognized as divine inasmuch as it shows itself human. The best Christians will not be the most obstinate of the orthodox but the most benevolent of the faithful. In the teachings and spirit of Christ, religion and morality are one and inseparable; or rather, religion is the sanctification of morality and morality is religion in action.

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“Read,” says Dean Stanley, “the description in the beatitudes of those who are truly happy; read the two great commandments in which our Founder said all his religion consisted; read the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, in which St. Paul declares that compared with charity or philanthropy, the perceptions of theoretical truth, all manifestations of theoretical zeal are as nothing; we thus see how

in each of these original conceptions of Christianity the moral elements of religion outweigh all others."

"Christ," says Robertson, "proclaims the identity between religion and goodness. Religion for Him did not consist in correct views, accurate observances, not even in devout feelings. According to Him, to be religious was to be good, and because of this the Pharisees became his enemies—those men of opinions and maxims, of ecclesiastical, ritual and spiritual pretension."

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The Kingdom of God consists neither in eating nor drinking, neither in sermons nor sabbaths, neither in history nor exegesis, neither in the inspiration of a book nor the infallibility of a man. It is virtue, justice, love, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. What are the works of religion? To attend the services, to hear the sermon, to read the Bible, to receive the sacraments? All these are means to awaken and revive religious feeling in the soul, but the works of religion are something else. Practical religion consists of all our duties, private, domestic, civic, professional, performed faithfully and in accordance with the will of God. The domain of religion extends to all that concerns man, the body as well as the soul. There are not sacred things and profane things.

Everything must be held as sacred. It is the province of religion to consecrate all things. "Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God."

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Meanwhile, religion does not limit its action to the moral improvement of the individual. It looks around for any great cause to be defended, for any slavery of the soul as well as the body to be abolished, for hypocrisy to be unmasked, for vices to be routed, for misfortune to be soothed, for evil passions to be subdued, for ignorance and prejudice to be dispelled, for every needed reform to be perfected, etc., and hence its social characteristic.

The social question to-day stands in importance before all others, before the political and, in a way, even before the religious. It is impossible not to take a serious interest in it. It is our inmost conviction that religion alone can solve it. Not such or such religion, but the spirit of Jesus Christ.

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Christianity thus far has passed through three successive phases. Its first age was one of simple evangelical teaching. Then followed an age of dogmatism, when theological definition was of prime importance. This in turn was succeeded by ecclesiasticism, when the Church dominated

thought and life. It was not until the Reformation that the individual was emancipated, and secured his spiritual rights. To-day still another transformation is taking place. Religion is passing from the individual to the social sphere. Its chief function is taken to be the practical expression of Christian principles in the relation of man to man. Its object henceforth is not less the regeneration of society than the salvation of the individual. To that end the Church has a double work to perform, a personal work and a collective work. In order to save the mass, she must begin with saving the individual, and the individual must be sought where he is, *i. e.*, at his home. The Church usually says: "Come and I will teach you;" the Master has said: "Go and teach!" In such a vast undertaking every Christian has his own task, and should say: "Here am I, Lord, send me." Instead of that it is usually said: "Here is my check; send some one in my place." Money cannot replace men; each must pay with his own personality.

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Moreover, in order to accomplish the mission entrusted to her, the Church cannot be too strongly organized. Every great enterprise in our day is promoted through organization. Even crime is organized, and in politics and elsewhere the greed of rapacious men makes headway only through

the ingenuity of complex organization. The need is imperative for the various Christian bodies of this great republic, being united in one powerful organization with one pre-eminent object, the regeneration of our national and social life. In these days, when the world seeks a new ideal and hungers for a larger life, the duty rests upon the Church to supply it with both. "If the Christian Church were all that it should be a single day, before night the face of the world would be renewed." The skepticism dangerous for Christians is not that concerning the authenticity and authority of the Scriptures, but that concerning the vitality of the Church itself. Has she the power to save society from the evils which enslave it and the dangers which threaten it? Is the common life her chief concern? These are the questions men are asking with no little dread lest a divided Church in which party interest still seems paramount to public concern should give back a negative response.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

**M**Y task in these concluding lines is to outline a few of the characteristics which belong to the Protestant Episcopal Church and in virtue of which she seems destined to occupy a central position in the cause of Christian unity and to fill the social, moral and religious wants of the future.

1. She is catholic.

A fact of first importance in the life of the Episcopal Church is her historic and organic continuity. She has never cut off communication with the past. Without making herself a slave to tradition, she has been able to recognize the workings of the divine spirit in the faithful of every age. Her creeds are not of her own manufacture. They are the consentient voice of Christendom from the apostolic age until now. Her liturgy is a treasury of reverent thought and utterance from devout men of every time. Pulsing with the spiritual life of the past, she gives herself freely to the present and looks forward with confidence to the future.

In distinction from Protestant bodies, especial stress is laid upon this fact: the Church is an organism—a living body of which Christ is the head. Its life is perpetuated according to plain biological principles. The organism does not die and come to life again. It lives continuously, binding the past, present and future in one. By a process of incorporation it brings the souls of men in contact with the divinely derived life. Its sacraments are not symbols merely but vehicles of that life. This view of the corporate life does not invalidate the reality of the individual life. Rome emphasizes the principle of incorporation almost exclusively. The soul is saved by virtue of its contact with the Church. Protestantism goes to the other extreme. The souls of men are saved individually—by virtue of a personal religious experience. The Episcopal Church believes that the truth lies in both views, reasonably considered. A soul is born into the world. The conditions of its life are twofold: individual and social. It has a life of its own and it has a life derived from contact with society about it. Both contribute to make its life. In her catholic position the Church insists upon the fact of the individual life but she insists equally upon the reality of the corporate life. The principle of solidarity is an essential part of her position.

## 2. Protestant.

While the Episcopal Church is pre-eminently catholic, she is also emphatically Protestant. In fact, she is the only church which protested from the first, and continued to protest *as a church*. Outside of her, the Reformation was a protestant movement on the part of individuals who protested in their own private name and then founded or joined associations already founded of those like-minded with themselves. The cause they espoused was a most sacred one and the principle at stake most vital. They contended for the spiritual rights of the individual and the principle of private judgment. In so positive a reactionary movement it is not surprising that so many were betrayed into extremes which repudiated not Romanism merely, but catholicism itself. The Church of England, while denying emphatically the supremacy of Rome, retained her equilibrium and avoided the dangers of ultra-protestantism. As far as the innovations of Romanism are concerned, she is persistently Protestant ; as far as the principles of catholicism are concerned she is eminently conservative.

## 3. Progressive.

She has proved her right to this title when in the sixteenth century she freed herself from the yoke of Rome, determined henceforth to act upon



her own responsibility, as circumstances might require. She has proved it, when, unmindful of the thirty-nine articles of her dogmatic epoch, thirsting after that union which Christianity suffers for so greatly in our time, she solemnly and bravely called to herself brothers of any name, reducing to four the conditions of her communion with other Christian bodies. And at this day, she stands ready to welcome within her fold all Protestant denominations, without any demand for the surrender of individual opinion. Progressive as the human mind, while Rome reproves progress and in her dread of it draws herself backward to the deadness of the middle ages, and hopes to carry mankind back with her, our Episcopal Church welcomes progress, blesses it, and advances full of confidence toward the coming generations, for she feels that they belong to her.

#### 4. Ethical.

The Episcopal Church is becoming more and more the working church. A parish building is now a necessary adjunct to the church building proper. And in these parish buildings benevolent work of every description and for all sorts of men and women, is constantly going on.

Sir Walter Besant wrote this lately of the Church of England: "The Church of England is now doing an immense amount of good. One cannot

overrate its services. I was asked some time ago to write an article for the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, describing the working of a London parish, and I investigated the matter fully, taking as my field of study a riverside parish in the East End. I found there one hundred laymen and women, volunteers, working for nothing, under the guidance of the clergyman and his curates; visiting the poor, forming clubs for the boys and girls, for young men and women, having mothers' meetings, children's crèches, classes of all kinds, lectures, libraries, reading-rooms, gymnasiums, and so on."

The following extract from a letter lately written from London testifies to the same effect: "The churches do more than they have ever done. We believe we are justified in saying that there is scarcely a slum anywhere, certainly not in London, where there is not a trained and eager band, lay and clerical, knowing everybody and everything, and fighting their best for the help of the wretched."

It is a stated fact that the Episcopal Church in New York does more of charity work than all the other churches of the metropolis put together, and this is what explains her marvelous growth in our great cities. There is not one of the larger churches of the metropolis which has not at least one mission with earnest workers in some of the

poorest quarters. Eighteen New York churches keep open houses during summer in the country or at the sea shore for the benefit of poor parishioners and other residents of their respective neighborhoods.

#### 5. Social.

The late Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Benson, being asked: "What have social difficulties to do with the Church's work? Are they not secular and economic questions?" replied, "Yes, and therefore they are questions of the deepest moment; they are the phenomena of the very world in which Christ is working. Let the clergy understand it so and preach and act accordingly, and they will find their power rise above their parish and other parishes. They will then be able to influence public action. \* \* \* These questions of poverty and labor, amelioration of conditions, larger participation in the rapidly increased wealth of commerce, have grown so important that it is necessary the clergy should know and think, and be able to advise those who would gladly consult them if they thought they could do so with advantage."

One who understood the importance of questions of industrial righteousness, is the Bishop of Durham, whose services in the great coal strike of ninety-three will long be remembered; and so, too,

among others, the Bishop of New York, whose sympathy for every right aspiration of labor has so frequently been expressed and whose time and ability have been on various occasions so happily given to the adjustment of industrial difficulties.

#### 6. Liberal.

This is, perhaps, the most distinguishing characteristic of the Anglo-American Church, that under her constitution men of almost every shade of opinion may live in a spirit of loyalty to her. Many efforts have been made to narrow her domain, to exclude those who did not agree with certain dogmatic theories. They have all failed. The fundamental principles of the Church are so much in favor of freedom and toleration as to embrace all these elements in her own liberal faith. Its breadth is such as to permit and include many forms of belief and practice. "Some of her bishops and people and editors may be low and some high," says Dr. Ewer, "but she is not sectarian low or sectarian high—she is broad and catholic. Through her Lows she shows, in spite of her Highs, sympathy with the members of the various sects. Through her Highs she shows, in spite of the Lows, sympathy with the organic ancient Church. Through her Broads she shows sympathy with the life and advance of modern thought and civilization."

While, therefore, I believe in the Catholic Church, not in the Roman Catholic (which is the least catholic, because it is Roman), but in that Church, invisible to-day to the natural eye, which includes all sincere believers in Jesus Christ, no matter where they are, or what name they bear, and known by God only, I hope in the Episcopal Church, destined, as it seems, to represent some day visible Catholicity, going back in its history to the first Christian ages, without pretensions to infallibility or immutability, admitting and knowing how to apply in case of need the principles of reformation and progress, ready to conform its teachings to scientific truths become incontestable, and to adapt its organization and its worship to the exigencies of time and place, recommending itself to-day more than any other church by the number and variety of its benevolent works.

By the fruit we know the tree.

I represent it to my mind as an immense cathedral with its grand nave and its side aisles. At the right it assembles those of its members who call themselves Catholic, having a side entrance in the direction of Rome. On the left side are found the so-called orthodox, ready to gather in by the transept door the Protestants, their brothers in orthodoxy. The vast central nave holds its doors

wide open, inviting all the believers in Christ, all the worshippers in spirit and in truth, to enter there ; and they shall assemble from every point of the horizon, followed by the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. All shall then adore their common Father in a spirit of true fraternity. Thus the prayer of generations is heard at last, the reign of God has come, the supreme wish of the Master is realized.

They are one in God and in his Church and there is but one fold under the guardianship of one Shepherd, Jesus Christ.











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